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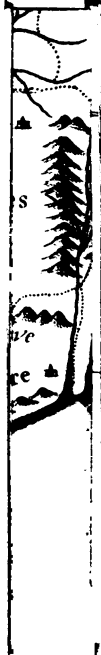








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A

**HISTORY**

OF THE

**ISLAND OF MADAGASCAR,**

COMPRISING

A POLITICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ISLAND,

THE RELIGION, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS OF ITS INHABITANTS,

AND

ITS NATURAL PRODUCTIONS:

WITH

**An Appendix,**

CONTAINING A HISTORY OF THE SEVERAL ATTEMPTS TO INTRODUCE  
CHRISTIANITY INTO THE ISLAND.



By SAMUEL COPLAND.

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TO

**WILLIAM ALERS HANKEY, ESQ.**

**THE BENEVOLENT TREASURER OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY,**

AND

**THE ZEALOUS PROMOTER**

**OF CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION,**

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES**

**ARE,**

**WITH SENTIMENTS OF UNFEIGNED RESPECT,**

**INSCRIBED**

**BY HIS OBEDIENT,**

**AND MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,**

**S. COPLAND.**





## PREFACE.

---

THE Author of the following pages is sensible that the practice of writing a long Preface is obsolete, and would gladly avail himself of the example of most modern writers in this respect ; but the novelty of the subject, and the nature of the information contained in his Work, render it necessary for him to give some account of the authorities from which it is derived.

The principal original Works which he has had occasion to consult in the compilation, are, *Flacourt's History of Madagascar*; *M. de V.'s Voyage to Madagascar*; *Voyages of the Dutch East-India Company*; *Drury's Narrative*; *Rochon's Voyage*; *Benjowsky's Memoirs*; *Wadstrom's Essay on Colonization*; and the *Missionary Accounts*. Many others have been consulted; but as the above contain the body of information, he thinks it necessary to speak particularly of them only.

Flacourt's History is considered authentic, and is quoted by all who have written on the

subject since his time. His account of the natives is nevertheless contradictory ; for when he speaks of them *abstractedly*, he praises them *as highly as possible*, and assures his reader they possess every natural good quality : but when in connection with his own transactions, he represents them as the most treacherous and bloody savages on earth. The only conclusion the writer can draw from it, is, that in the latter case he seeks to justify the barbarous atrocities that were committed upon the natives by *his order*.

“The Voyage,” by Monsieur de V., an anonymous writer, was published at Paris, in 1722, but contains an ample account of the transactions at Madagascar, from the year 1660, during the time Chamargou was governor. It is authenticated by the French government of the time when published

Drury’s narrative of his own stay on the island was published in 1727. It was long a subject of doubt, whether his account was to be depended on. But besides the broad simplicity of his style, and the artless manner in which he tells his own tale, without going a step out of the way, his account corresponds in many particulars, with French authors whose works it was impossible for him to be acquainted with. The names, also, of places, and other objects he has occasion to men-

tion, are spelt according to the English orthography, but having the French pronunciation. There is, therefore, no just ground to question his veracity.

Of Rochon's Work the writer wishes to say but little :—he has made considerable use of it ; at the same time it is not an authority from which he would seek to form correct opinions. It was written at a period and in a country replete with false philosophy, which Rochon appears to have deeply imbibed ; and he was also intimately connected with some of the leading characters at the Isle of France, whose cause he has of course espoused.

Benyowsky's Memoirs, and Wadstrom's Essay, may be placed together, as the latter illustrates and confirms the former. The Author has given his opinion of Benyowsky's Work, in that part which relates to him, and therefore it is unnecessary to repeat it here. Dr. Wadstrom's Essay he found of great use in forming that opinion, as that gentleman was cotemporary with the Count, and was but too well acquainted with the bad treatment he received from the French government.

Of the authenticity of the Missionary Accounts, it is unnecessary to say a word. The

transactions since 1818, both in the body of the Work, and in the Appendix, are extracted from them. They will be found highly interesting as historical facts, and also as presenting a view of human nature under a new and unexpected form.

The Map may be depended on for the fidelity of its outline and its bearings, and also of the *relative situation* of the provinces, having been corrected by one in the possession of the Missionary Society, lately drawn from actual survey. The writer cannot speak so confidently to the accuracy of the statistical boundaries, which were originally marked out by Flacourt, since whose time nothing of the kind has been attempted.

The circumstances which gave birth to the publication of this Volume are well known to the religious public; namely, the occurrences at the Missionary Meeting in May 1821. The design of the Author is to render permanent the impression which was then felt, by presenting a faithful picture of the nation who have placed themselves under the protection (or rather tuition) of Great Britain; and also, by an impartial account of the transactions of the London Missionary Society, in reference to Madagascar, to represent the claims of that Institution upon

the support of the Christian world: In the fulfilment of this task, he has neither misrepresented nor exaggerated any facts.

No little difficulty has been experienced in collecting materials to complete the chain of historical events—nothing on the subject having been published, in a separate form, since Rochon's Voyage: but by obtaining access to several of the literary institutions in town, he has fully accomplished his purpose. The compilation, under even these circumstances, has been attended with considerable labour; but if the reader's pleasure and profit from the perusal be in any degree equal to that of the writer, he will consider himself amply compensated for his trouble.

He would feel himself deficient in gratitude, were he to omit expressing his acknowledgments to those gentlemen who preside over the Institutions referred to, for the handsome manner in which they have assisted him in the collection of the materials; without which assistance, the Work must have been published in an incomplete form. He also acknowledges similar obligations to several private friends, who have kindly rendered their aid in the progress of the Work; and he can with confidence assure the reader that



it contains the substance of all the correct information that can at present be collected on the subject.

*Stepney Green, Jan. 10, 1822.*

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THE  
HISTORY OF MADAGASCAR.

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CHAP. I.

*Introductory Description of the Island—its Discovery—  
Extent—Geographical Situation—and general Features.*

THE Island of Madagascar is one of the largest in the world, being nine hundred miles long from north to south, and three hundred broad, in its widest part from east to west. It was first discovered by Europeans in the year 1506, when Lawrence Almeida, son of the first Portuguese Viceroy sent to the East Indies, touched at it. It does not appear to have been noticed at all by Vasco de Gama, who first opened the passage to India, which is rather remarkable, and can only be accounted for from his having kept close to the African shore, both going and returning. Its name, in the language of the country, is indistinctly pronounced Madecasse, or Malegash. The Portuguese called it Isle of St. Lawrence;

whether from the name of its discoverer, or the day on which it was discovered, is not known: some of our best geographers have supposed the latter, as it is a prevailing custom with the Portuguese, to call their new possessions after the name of the Saint on whose festival they were acquired.

The supposition that this island was known to the ancients, and spoken of by Pliny, under the name of *Lerne*, and by Ptolemy, under that of *Menuthias*, appears to be erroneous, it being certain that they had no knowledge of any country south of *Sierra Leone*. The Arabs and the Moors have frequented the island from time immemorial, and called it *Serandib*. The latter, in sailing from the ports of the Red Sea, followed the coast of *Abyssinia*, and entering the channel of *Mosambique*, traded alternately with the Africans and *Malegashes*; using, in their commerce with the latter, the ports of *Vingara* and *Bombetoe*. The Arabs to this day carry on an extensive trade with some of the provinces, particularly that of *Boyana*, the country of the *Seclaves*, where they have a factory.

This island extends from  $12^{\circ}$ . to  $25^{\circ}.40'$ . south latitude, and from  $43^{\circ}.41'$ . to  $50^{\circ}.30'$ . east longitude, meridian of London. It is six hundred and seventy leagues from the Cape of Good Hope, one hundred and eighty-six from the Isle of France, and one hundred and fifty from that of Bourbon. Its nearest point to the coast of Africa, is Cape Manambaugh, which lies opposite to Mosambique, at the distance

of about eighty-seven leagues. The channel between is exceedingly dangerous for ships, on account of the rapidity of the current, and an immense bank of sand called the Bank of Pracel, which extends nearly half across the channel. Notwithstanding this, most of our East-India ships pass through it, unless forced into other courses by storms. The eastern coast of Madagascar, from Cape Itapore, in  $25^{\circ} 6'$  latitude, to the Bay of Antongil, runs north north-east, and south south-west; and from thence to the extremity of the island nearly north by west. From Cape Itapore, to the country of Caremboule, it extends westward, forming a quarter of a circle. From thence to the mouth of the river Sacabiti, it runs north-west, then north by east, and north by west, to the seventeenth degree of latitude; and from thence to the extremity of the island again, north-east by north. The coast is throughout divided by rivers, many of them navigable a considerable way up their channels; and the bays and gulfs are numerous, forming excellent roads and harbours. The southern extremity of the island was formerly in the possession of the French, who were exterminated several times by the natives, through their bad conduct and mismanagement.

This immense island is estimated to contain two hundred millions of acres of land, watered, with the exception of one or two provinces, by innumerable rivers, streams, and torrents, which flow from the mountains and hills. Many parts of it are marshy,

but in general the face of the country exhibits all that is pleasing to the eye and to the imagination. Nature here seems to have done her utmost, and to have lavished her stores in a boundless profusion. The European traveller, who has hitherto been unacquainted with the scenery of tropical countries, is lost in astonishment, when traversing the vast plains and forests of Madagascar; the former, clothed with eternal verdure, and covered with numerous herds of cattle; while the latter, overhanging the sides of the mountains, whose summits seem to vie with the clouds in height, present a scene of gloomy sublimity which strikes the mind with awe, heightened by the effect of the stupendous cataracts, which tumble over the craggy precipices with a roaring that is heard for miles round.

These forests are composed of trees of every description, and adapted to every purpose, both of the useful and ornamental kinds. Some are of an extraordinary bulk and height, and seem almost coeval with the creation. Many of the woods are of great extent, and all of them are difficult to explore on account of the immense number of climbing and parasitical plants, which crowd around in every direction, and, with the thorny brushwood, form an impenetrable mass. The future botanist will here enter upon a new and boundless field, hitherto scarcely trodden by the foot of science, but inclosing so great a number of novel subjects for his interesting speculations, that the longest life

would be too short for the task of investigation and arrangement.

The mountains are numerous in most of the provinces, and a chain of them runs nearly through the extent of the island, from south to north, forming natural divisions of it. They abound in mines of iron, steel, and (according to some accounts) silver and copper. Gold also, and abundance of precious stones, are found in the streams that flow from them, some of which are impregnated with the different minerals contained in the bowels of the island, such as brimstone, saltpetre, &c. &c.

The continuity of the plains is agreeably diversified by gently rising grounds, on which the natives build their towns and villages. These are surrounded by plantations of rice, barley, yams, &c., the most fertile spots being selected for that purpose; while the rivers and streams, which intersect the country in every direction, impart beauty and fertility to an inconceivable degree. Abundance of the necessaries of life, and even of its luxuries, spring up spontaneously; and the natives want nothing but the art of living at peace among themselves, to render them, as far as natural advantages extend, the richest and happiest people on earth. Fortunate, indeed, was it for Madagascar, that its discovery took place subsequent to that of the Western Continent, and that the resources, the speculations, and the cupidity of the nations of Europe, were pre-occupied to such an extent, as to leave them no opportunity of exploring



the riches of her provinces, and scarcely to make an attempt upon her integrity as an independent island. It is to this that she owes her safety ; and it is to be hoped, that whatever nation may hereafter seek to reap advantage by an intercourse with her inhabitants, will confine themselves to that liberal and enlightened policy, which alone can establish confidence, and render that intercourse permanent and profitable.

## CHAP. II.

*Divisions of the Island—Descriptive Account of the principal Provinces, and their Productions.*

MADAGASCAR, like other uncivilized countries, is divided into provinces, each having its distinct independence as a nation. This appears to be the most ancient form of government, and doubtless arose in the early ages of the world, from every family constituting a separate tribe. Their wants were few, and easily supplied; and it was not till civilization extended itself, and luxury increased,—when the arts of civil life, and reciprocal wants and dangers, taught mankind their mutual dependence,—that the importance and advantages of political union were discovered.\*

There are generally reckoned twenty-eight provinces in Madagascar; but one or two others are added by late historians. Their names are as follow:

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\* It is true, history affords exceptions to this general rule; and we need not go beyond our own times, or our own quarter of the globe, to find one. But if, in the present or any past age, a large portion of the uncivilized tribes are found to bend under the despotic sway of an overgrown autocrat, we make no hesitation in asserting—however *mildly* the power may be exercised—that the discordant materials are drawn and kept together by the iron hand of military despotism, rather than a consciousness of any blessings arising from such a confederacy.

Anossi, or Carcanossi, Manatengha, the Valley of Amboule, Vohitsbang, Itomampo, Icondre, Vatemahou, Anachimoussi, Eringdrane, Vohitz-Anghombe, Manacarongha, Matatane, Antavare, Ghalemboule, Tametavi, Sahaveh, Voolou-Voolou, Andoufoutchi, Manghabei, Adcimoutchi, Mandrerei, Ampatre, Caramboule, Mahafalle, Houlouve, Sivah, Ivandrou, Machicore, Boyana, and Bohemare, or Vohemare. All these provinces are very fertile, and abound in cattle and pasturage. Their geographical situations may be seen by referring to the map ; but as many of them are very small, and some of them uninhabited, in consequence of being devastated by intestine wars, we shall give a description only of those most deserving of notice.

Anossi.—This province is situated between  $23^{\circ}. 18'$  and  $26^{\circ}$ . of latitude. It is nearly two hundred miles long, and was the principal theatre of the operations of the French in most of their attempts to establish themselves on the island. The principal settlement was at Fort Dauphin, which stands on the peninsula of Tholangari, in  $25^{\circ}. 10'$  latitude\*. The country is rich and watered by many rivers, the principal of which are the Franchere and the Manghasia; most of the rest run into the Franchere, which rises on Mount Manghage, and falls into the sea about two leagues south of Fort Dauphin. A

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\* The latitude is always to be considered south, as the island lies wholly south of the equator.

lake is formed at its mouth, about half a league wide, and deep enough for any ship, but its entrance is liable to be closed by a sand bank. There are many considerable villages on its banks, which belong to the chief of the country. The Manghasia rises on Mount Siliva, and runs across the bay of the same name: it is navigable for many miles.

Anossi is exceedingly rich and fertile, abounding with pastures, cattle, and plantations of corn, rice, and fruit-trees. It is surrounded by mountains covered with trees and shrubs, and the whole country is diversified with numerous hills and plains. On its coast are several peninsulas, with excellent harbours and bays; the chief ones are Dauphin Bay, and the Bay of Louca, or Itapore: the last is very convenient for shipping, which may ride at anchor in perfect safety, notwithstanding the entrance is rocky and dangerous. The Portuguese formerly had a fort on the top of a steep rock, near a village, about seven leagues from Fort Dauphin; but it was destroyed, and the garrison massacred by the natives.

This country is inhabited by whites and negroes, which constitute the seven classes of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

The Vale of Amboule commences at the mouth of the river Manampani, in 23°. 30'. latitude. It is very rich, and produces esculent plants and fruits in abundance. The oxen and cows are extremely fat, having the richest pasturage to rove over. The

large town of Amboule stands in the vale ; near it is a fountain of hot water, which will boil an egg hard ; and it is a specific for the cold gout. Iron and steel are found in plenty on the mountains, and the natives are very expert at forging various instruments from it. The highest mountain is Hiela, which is one of the loftiest on the island. Their chief is called Rabertau, or Great Lord ; he possesses absolute power, and is one of the most considerable men on the island.

The province of Machicore is of great extent, being seventy leagues across from east to west, and fifty from north to south. It was devastated and ruined by wars some years ago, the natives being obliged to conceal themselves in the woods, through fear of their enemies, subsisting upon roots and wild cattle. This, and four adjoining provinces, were formerly governed by one chief, named Dian Baluoalen, or Lord of a Hundred Thousand Parks. During his life-time these countries enjoyed profound peace, and flourished in excess of riches and pleasure ; but, upon his death, a war broke out between his sons, which was carried on with so much animosity and fury, that it ended in their entire destruction.

The great river Jonghelaye takes its course on one side of this province, separating it to the north from the province of Ivoronhehoc. This river, which at its mouth is about half a mile broad, is navigable for large ships for many leagues ; it falls into St. Augustine's Bay, very nearly under the Tropic

of Capricorn. This bay is sheltered from the most dangerous winds, but the entrance is rocky and difficult. The French had formerly a strong fort on the south side of it, and the English East-India ships frequently cast anchor there to take in refreshments, and land their sick men, in order to their recovery. The province of Ivoronhehoc lies on one side of the bay, and that of Houlouve on the other.

Eringdrane.—This province is very extensive and populous; and its chief can, upon an emergency, raise an army of thirty thousand men. It is extremely fertile, and has large herds of cattle on the sides of the mountains. Several considerable rivers run through, or rise, in this province, most of which run into the Bay of Mansiatre, in 20°. latitude.

The province of Vohitsonghombe is separated from the last-mentioned by the river Mansiatre. It is very populous, and can bring into the field an hundred thousand warriors; they are generally at war with the Eringdranes: when this is not the case both parties unite occasionally, and make a descent upon the Comoro islands. Indeed all the provinces on the north-west side of the island are given too much to these predatory excursions. The island of Johanna has been of late years the frequent scene of their buccaneering operations, they having been introduced there by Benyowsky, though without any idea of such a result. The master of one of his ships having betrayed the trust imposed on him, by piratically seizing

the vessel, was suspected of having sailed to Johanna; upon which Benyowsky despatched an open boat, with two Europeans and several natives, bearing letters to the king to detain the vessel. This was the first knowledge the Madagasses acquired of Johanna, and they have not forgotten to take advantage of the event.

The towns in Vohitsonghombe are much more picturesque than those of any other quarter of the island, the houses being well built and commodious. The inhabitants are very rich in cattle, rice, iron, and steel. It is bounded on the east by the Ambohitzenene, or Red Mountains, being two hundred miles long from east to west, and about seventy broad from north to south: the land to the south of the Bay of Mansiatre is called by the Portuguese, Terra del Gada, or Land of Cattle, from the vast herds that are fed there.

Matatane.—This country is famous for being the principal residence of the race called Zafe Ramini, and Zafe Casimambou, an account of which will be found in another part of this work: they are both descended from one stock; but the former have got the ascendancy, by means of mixing with the other natives by marriage, and they treat them as slaves. About a hundred and fifty years ago, they put them all to the sword, except the women and children, who were placed on an island formed by two rivers, which they cultivated.

This province is flat, but fruitful, abounding in sugar-canes, honey, yams, and cattle. It is watered

by many large rivers, which contain plenty of fish, and some of them are navigable. The sugar-cane is so plentiful, and the quality so productive, that many ships might be annually laden with sugar, if the natives were acquainted with the mode of manufacture, and possessed the necessary implements.

The district of Ambohismene takes its name from the Red Mountains, round which it lies. These mountains, situated in 20°. latitude, extend fifteen leagues inland, besides stretching along the coast, and are beheld from a great distance at sea; the highest of them being elevated eighteen hundred fathoms above its level. In its shape it bears a great resemblance to the Table Mountain, at the Cape of Good Hope; but the islanders say it is inaccessible to Europeans, on account of the steep rocks and precipices with which it is surrounded. Ambohismene, in other respects, is flat and marshy; and there is a lake fifteen leagues in length, and the same in breadth, containing several small islands. The inhabitants are called Zaferahongs: their rivers produce gold dust, and they are rich in iron, cattle, rice, sugar-canes, yams, silk garments, &c. The bay or gulf of Tametave, called by the French Port-aux-Prunes, or Plum Harbour, belongs to this district. It is situated in 18°. 30'. latitude, and receives the waters of several rivers, one of which is navigable for ships.

The province of Voolou-Voolou lies next to the foregoing: in this district is situated the port called by the French Foule Point; but the natives give it



the same name as the province to which it belongs. This port is the most frequented of any in the north-east part of the island. It has a market well supplied with provisions, which are sold at a low price to the ships which touch there: they consist of rice, yams, bananas, cocoa-nuts, various kinds of fruits, cattle, sheep, poultry, and hogs. Many years ago the inhabitants were forbidden, by one of their sorcerers, to sell the latter: the old man assured them, that if they persisted in it, the most dreadful misfortunes would befall them; and that the only way effectually to avoid these calamities, was by destroying the whole breed of swine: however, the injunction not extending to Europeans, they undertook to hunt them, and supplied themselves plentifully from the mountains, where they found large droves.

The harbour of Foule Point is surrounded by a reef of rocks, and is situated in 17°. 40'. 20" latitude, and 50° longitude. The shores are very bold, and the least depth of water, at low tide, is twenty-three feet. The depth of the basin is fifty fathoms; and it is capable of containing ten large vessels, anchored alongside each other. The sea never rises or falls more than four or five feet at spring or neap tides. During the latter, the coral rocks, which form the reef that surrounds the harbour, make their appearance above the water, covered with abundance of natural curiosities; such as mosses, marine plants, black coral, madrepores, sea-stars, and a great variety of the most beautiful shells of every shape and colour.

The mouths of the rivers, which flow into the bay, are bordered with mangles, the branches of which are loaded with excellent oysters that adhere to them at high water, presenting a most singular appearance. The neighbourhood of Foule Point is not very populous ; but the villages which are scattered in its vicinity are highly picturesque. They are built on the declivities of little hills, and are defended by pallisades, and shaded by fruit-trees, and the *raven*, a kind of palm-tree peculiar to Madagascar. This tree is the most useful they have: the top of it is eaten after being boiled, like the cabbage-palm: its wood is used in building houses ; and the ribs of its leaves, having the solidity of wood, and the pliability of leather, form the walls and partitions, being fastened together in an ingenious manner: the leaves themselves serve to thatch the houses, and are likewise converted into plates, dishes, cups, and spoons. A gummy substance is found under the membranes which inclose the flower, of an exquisite flavour, which may be termed natural honey. The natives make large planks of this tree, by splitting it from one end to the other, and straightening it immediately, to prevent its warping.

The lands belonging to Foule Point abound with pastures and cattle, and its rivers with wild fowl and fish. The Ongleby is a beautiful stream, which rises in the Red Mountains, and meanders through the country, receiving many lesser streams and rivulets in its course. On its banks are meadows of the richest

pasturage, enamelled with flowers of every variety, and of the most splendid colours. It is navigable for more than twenty leagues for the piroguas of the natives; but, what is very remarkable, it entirely disappears in the sand, about four miles from its mouth. Like all the rivers in Madagascar, it is infested with monstrous crocodiles, which renders it dangerous to travel along its banks. Rochon relates that he saw an ox dragged away and devoured by one of those formidable animals.

Ghalemboule is the next province. Its coast is belted with a forest of lofty trees, two leagues in width, which runs along its whole extent. The bay of Ghalemboule is very extensive, having a good roadstead behind the rocks; but these, and the violence of the waves, render it dangerous. The village of St. Matthew, called by the natives Ratsimalone, lies on the coast. The soil of Ghalemboule is rich, and frequent rains preserve the verdure from being parched up. The meadows produce plentiful pasturage, though they have fewer cattle than some other provinces. The mountains are peculiarly fruitful, and yield in abundance all the necessaries of life, common to other parts of the island. The inhabitants of this and the last-mentioned province, as well as those of St. Mary Isle, (called in the language of the country, Nossy Hibraham), and the bay of Antongil, call themselves Zafe-Hibraham, or descendants of Abraham, of which we shall speak in another part of this work.

Mangabei, or, as it is now called, the country of the bay of Antongil, is not very extensive ; but it is of great importance, on account of the excellent harbour it possesses. This harbour is six leagues in width, and extends a considerable way towards the north, inland, forming a cape to the eastward, on which stands the fort erected by Count Benyowsky, called Louisbourg. Several fine rivers flow into the bay, which is situated in 15°. latitude. At the end of it lies the little island of Aiguillon, a beautiful spot, which is elevated considerably above the water. It is two leagues in circumference, entirely covered with the most delightful verdure, and produces in abundance all sorts of plants, fruits, bananas, fowls, and honey. It affords a most agreeable place of refreshment to sailors after a voyage. The Dutch and Portuguese have each of them had a fort near the bay ; that of the former was called Spakenburg, and was erected in 1595, in their first voyage to the East-Indies : it contained in the inclosure about two hundred houses. The other was called St. Angelo, and was built near a large town of the same name. Mangabei properly belongs to the province of Andou-vouch, which extends quite across to the western coast. The population is considerable, and are called Sambarrives : they can, upon emergency, raise a considerable army of warriors.

The country of Boyana lies on the western coast, between the 14°. and 16°. of latitude. It is a flat country, with few woods, but consisting of immense

plains, watered with numerous streams, and covered with thousands of wild oxen, which belong to any one who can catch them. The inhabitants are called Seclaves, and their king is a despotic monarch, having the power of life and death over his subjects, who are no better than slaves. The chiefs are nominated by him; and he always keeps a numerous standing army on foot, and could at any time raise thirty thousand warriors. There are several excellent harbours on the coast, which are frequented by the natives of the Comoro Islands, Johanna, Mayotto, &c., who have established a factory at Maronvai, the capital of Boyana. The trade, however, is interrupted by the frequent wars which take place between the two parties. The principal articles which the Seclaves receive, are cloths, combs, silver bracelets, gold buckles, razors, knives, glass beads, &c.; and they give in exchange, skins, incense, gum-benjamin, amber, wax, and wood in planks.

Vohemaro is the most northern province, extending from the Bay of Antongil to Cape Natal, or Ambre, the extremity of the island. It is an extensive, but mountainous country, and has been very little explored by Europeans, the coast being exceedingly rocky and dangerous. It is reported that great quantities of gold are found in this province; and, as a confirmation of this report, it is said, all the goldsmiths of Anossi are natives of Vohemaro.

The Island of St. Mary (or Nossy Hibraham) being a dependency of Madagascar, requires to be noticed.

Its northern extremity reaches to within a short distance of the Bay of Antongil, from whence it extends along the coast, at the distance of two or three leagues, to within eleven leagues of Foule Point. This island formed the principal retreat of the pirates, who, in the 17th and beginning of the 18th centuries, infested the Indian seas. Here they formed their establishment; and, by contracting alliances with the natives, assuming their manners, and adopting their customs, gained their confidence and friendship; while the rich prizes they continually sent in, the mode of obtaining which was unknown to the natives, brought so much trade amongst them, that they looked upon them with respect, as benefactors: they therefore acquired consequence; and their descendants, to this day, hold the first ranks amongst the Madegasses.

This island is extremely rich and fertile, and abounds in every necessary of life. The pastures are so excellent, that the Madegasses send cattle over to fatten. The air, however, is, at certain seasons of the year, very unhealthy. The French formed a settlement there about the year 1750; but the mortality occasioned by the fevers with which they were attacked, was so great, that they gave the island the name of "The Grave of the French." Benyowsky purchased it of Hiavi, the then sovereign of Foule Point; but in consequence of the expulsion of the French from Madagascar, it has now returned to its former dependency.

## CHAP. III.

*Soil—Air and Climate—Agriculture—Towns—  
Buildings.*

IN a country of such extent, and comprehending so many degrees of latitude as Madagascar, the soil must necessarily be various : nevertheless, in general it consists of a deep rich mould, probably formed by the heavy accumulation of decayed vegetable matter, which is constantly increasing, the productions of nature being forced up by the mild temperature of the air, frequent showers of rain, and the innumerable springs and rivulets which run in every direction. But little artificial help is necessary to render this alluvial soil productive ; and though agriculture is much practised, the only manure used by the natives is wood ashes, which they procure by burning large heaps of bamboo, and other wood. In many of the provinces there are large plains, where the soil is a stiff clay, of a reddish colour, producing abundance of grass. There is found also in some districts a red earth, similar to Bol Armenian, and another sort like that called Terra Sigellata, which is brought from the Isle of Lemnos. A fat clayey kind of marl is found in many parts, as white as chalk, of so soapy a quality, that the natives use it in washing ; and it would answer in the bleaching of linen. In the southern districts are some extensive plains, consisting entirely of sand, of an arid quality : these are desti-

tute of springs or rivulets, and produce nothing but a few trees, and the aloe, called tetech, which latter, however, is very plentiful. These tracks are rarely to be met with, and chiefly near the sea-coast. The soil on some of the mountains is shallow, and saturated with mineral waters, which render it sterile; but the valleys at the foot of the mountains generally consist of a deep soil, extremely rich and fertile. Many parts of the country are marshy, the inhabitants having not yet learned the art of draining them: these spots produce in abundance a kind of wild cane, bamboos, and reeds.

The air is salubrious, except in the rainy season. Frost and snow are unknown there; and the heat during the summer, which lasts about three months, is so tempered by the sea breezes, which regularly spring up about nine o'clock in the morning, and continue till six or seven in the evening, that it is seldom inconvenient; and the rest of the year is a continual spring-time, in which the natives do not cease sowing and planting. The bad or rainy season comprehends the months of January and February, at which time the inhabitants of the sea-coasts retire to the interior and mountainous parts of the country, in order to avoid the fevers which prevail, owing to the humidity of the air.\*

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\* All Europeans are attacked, with more or less violence, by these fevers, which may be ascribed to the marshy and wooded nature of the country, an entire alteration of food, or unadaptation of the climate to the European constitution; but most probably all these causes unite.



The vicinity of the marshes, also, is unhealthy, owing to the exhalations which arise from them; and their effects are greatly promoted by the cultivation of the red rice, which growing only upon wet lands, the natives use artificial means to prepare the plantations, and leave the waters to evaporate spontaneously.

The south-east and south-west winds prevail from March to the middle or end of September; after which, the north-east, north, north-west, and west, continue to blow. Storms and hurricanes are unknown at Madagascar; and, were the cultivation of the land on a more regular and extended scale, the draining of the marshes\*, and the clearing of the forests in the vicinity of the towns, to take place, the principal causes of disease would be removed, and the natives at least, whose constitutions are adapted to the climate, would in a great measure be relieved from a scourge which annually carries off great numbers of them.

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\* That the marshes contribute in a large proportion to the severity of the attack, was proved to a demonstration by Benyowsky, during his Governor-generalship, at the Bay of Antongil. On his first arrival, his men and himself were almost instantly seized with the fever in the most violent manner: great numbers died, and amongst them his only son; himself and his wife narrowly escaping with their lives. But after the marshes round Louisbourg were drained, and the ground cultivated, the new-comers withstood the action of the climate seventeen months, and then had slight attacks, unaccompanied by those dreadful ravings and convulsions which were experienced in the first instance; and the mortality was greatly abated.

Agriculture is yet in its infancy in Madagascar, notwithstanding it is extensively practised: they have neither ploughs, harrows, nor working cattle; and the division of labour (the principle which facilitates and expedites every manual employment) is unknown amongst them. The implements made use of are the spade, shovel, pick-axe, and hoe. The former are used in planting yams, potatoes, and other roots of the kind; and the latter in sowing rice and other grains. The process is simple and unlaborious;—they make small holes in the ground, at a little distance from each other, with the pick-axe or hoe, into which the children throw a few kernels of rice, or whatever grain they intend it for, and shuffle the mould over it with their feet; and such is the raging fertility of the soil, that this slight preparation is generally rewarded with a produce of a hundred fold. The red rice, as we have before noticed, grows only on wet lands; therefore, in situations where the natural moisture is not sufficient to promote its cultivation, they make cuts, in the month of December, to convey the excess of water from the rivers, during the rainy season, upon the lands intended to be sown, which are banked round to retain it. This is suffered to remain until the ground is thoroughly saturated, and has acquired the consistence of a bog, when they turn in a drove of cattle to divide the soil with their feet, which answers the purpose of ploughing, and the rice is sown immediately after: it soon springs up, and, when it gets into the blade, is again covered with water,

which is then left to evaporate by the action of the sun :—the time of planting is the sickly or wet season.

The fields or plantations are inclosed with fences of bamboo and other stakes, and the preparation of the soil is generally conducted by slaves. But in the provinces of Ghaleboule and Manghabei, the women and children are employed in this work. It being a season of festivity with them, their manner of conducting the operation is extremely entertaining ;—they make a hole in the earth with a stick, amongst the ashes which are strewed on the surface, and throw in two or three grains of rice, which they cover with their feet, singing and dancing all the time in the most cheerful manner. Both men and women in these districts are very industrious, being employed in the fields from sun-rise to sun-set ; the men in cutting and burning canes for manure, and the women in planting, weeding, or harvesting the rice and other grains. The fields exhibit a very interesting appearance. All kinds of grain grow to a great height ; the white rice (of which a proportion of three-fourths to one of red is grown) flourishes on the high grounds only, and its cultivation is in no respect similar to that of the red. Besides rice and barley, they grow several kinds of beans and peas, and some maize ; these are sown at different times, and one or two species of rice grow only in winter. Of yams they cultivate several kinds, cutting them for seed as we do potatoes. Some of them grow to a great size, especially the fanghitz, which is as large as a man's body.

The harvest is got in at different times, according as the several kinds of grain ripen. In June the barley arrives at perfection, when it is cut and tied in sheaves, which are carried by the natives on their heads to the vicinity of their dwellings. The rice ripens according to the time it is planted, for they have it at the same period green, in flower, and ripe: this is generally cut singly, or stalk by stalk, and harvested with great care. The rice barns are built at a little distance from their dwellings, and are elevated on strong wooden pillars to preserve them from the rats and other vermin. Many of the Madagascar farmers are very rich both in cattle and grain; some, in the northern part of the island, know not the number of their oxen by two or three thousand. There is no regular appropriation of the land; any piece of ground that is clear, is free to the use of the person who chooses to cultivate it, upon paying a small quit-rent to the chief of the district, who is considered as the only rightful lord of the soil: and if the first occupier quits it, any other person may immediately take possession of it; but no one must infringe upon his neighbour's occupation. The principal enemies the farmers have to contend with (next to their *own species*), are the wild boars: these come from the woods in droves, both by night and day; and, if not well watched, make terrible havoc amongst the yams and potatoes. It falls to the lot of the poor negro slaves to keep these sturdy marauders off, and the task is attended with no little difficulty: they have

an active breed of dogs, of the fox kind, with small short ears, long noses, and reddish hair, which are very useful to give the alarm ; but they seldom dare to attack the swine, who are generally headed by an old one of some years standing, and, consequently, with large tusks. A Madagascar farmer never goes out without his musket or spear, that he may be prepared for these savage animals.

We have before observed, that no other manure than wood ashes is used ; nor is any other necessary. In such a country, where the proportion of good land is so great, compared with the population, it is unnecessary to occupy one piece of ground many successive years ; so that fresh land, of the finest quality, may be brought into cultivation every year, if requisite. Nor is this all : the great accumulation of vegetable matter, which the warmth of the climate continually throws up, forms a rich manure of itself, (especially if fed off, or trodden down by the large herds of sheep and oxen which rove unconstrained over the country,) and thus furnishes fresh stamina for a new produce.\* It is well known, that in America, many large tracts of land, which have been cultivated for upwards of a century, have never required manure, but year after year produce the most abundant crops.\*

Around the dwellings of the farmers are to be seen fowls of every description, large quantities of which are

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\* This appears strange to an English farmer, who, if he neglect to manure his land, for at least every other crop, looks

hatched and brought up ; great numbers of hogs, also, are fattened in some of the districts, but very few are eaten on the island, except by the lowest classes. The quantity of grain produced in Madagascar, is always in proportion (as near as they can guess) to the consumption : and, when the frequent arrival of ships makes it probable that a demand, greater than that of the general average of years, will be made in future, more ground is instantly brought into cultivation. The plenty or scarcity, however, depends, in a great measure, on the internal state of the island. When the natives are at peace, agriculture goes on well, the crops flourish, and the herds graze in security. But civil discord so frequently reigns amongst these hardy warriors, that, instead of a plentiful crop just ready for harvest, it is no unusual thing to find devastated fields, towns and houses in ruins, the inhabitants sculking in the woods, and the cattle driven to some secret recess, or slaughtered and left to putrefy on the plains. Such are the dreadful effects of ambition, avarice, and revenge ; and whether in half savage Madagascar, or civilized Europe, the causes and effects remain the same, though differences may exist in their mode of warfare, or the circumstances of their

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in vain for the reward of his toil. But the fact is, that in this country, the proportion of *naturally good land* is very small, a proof of which is found in the quantity of artificial manure, which is annually required to keep up the fertility of the generality of lands, independent of that which they produce within themselves.

relative situations. Politicians and statesmen may employ their sophistry to justify in the one case what they condemn in the other ; but the principles which lead to such fatal results amongst a tribe of savages, should find no advocate in nations professing to be more enlightened.

The towns are for the most part built on commanding eminences, though some stand in retired situations in the woods. They are commonly defended by two rows of strong palisades, strengthened by large posts of bamboo, placed at the distance of five feet from each other, and sunk a considerable depth into the ground. The entrance is formed by the two ends of the circle or square, extending beyond each other three or four yards, leaving a narrow lane or passage between. Within this fence is a parapet of earth four feet in height; and on the outside it is fortified by a ditch ten feet in breadth, and six in depth. A guard of ten or twenty men is constantly kept near the entrance, and, generally, spies are appointed in certain situations, to give notice of the approach of an enemy.

The houses have no upper chambers or garrets, nor cellars underneath; they consist of one floor only. The roofs are made shelving, and are covered with the leaves of rates, bamboo, or the raven palm; the outside walls are generally constructed of two-inch planks, and the inner partitions of a kind of matting, made of the filaments of the raven leaf, joined exceedingly neat and strong; the hearth is

about four feet square, raised from the ground upon sand, with three stones for the cooking utensils; they have no chimneys, and, as they keep up a fire all the year round, their houses are scarcely habitable by Europeans, on account of the continual smoke. Some of their buildings, however, are constructed of more fragile materials; but it is only in cases where their civil dissensions render it probable that a sacking will take place, or after such an event has occurred, and driven them to seek a temporary residence in some distant and unfrequented spot. On such occasions, they run up a hut of the boughs of trees, thatch it with any thing that is at hand, and make the sides close with moss or grass. These huts are built in a conical form, like hay-cocks, and the doors are so low, that the inmates are obliged to stoop almost on their knees in entering.

The dwelling of the chief is called a Donac; it consists of several buildings well constructed, and surrounded by a strong pallisade, the entrance of which is usually guarded by two or three armed men. The principal house is for the chief himself, and the others for his wife and concubines, though the former has generally better accommodations than the latter. Many of the houses belonging to the Rhoandrians, are built with considerable taste and elegance. No one is permitted to enter the donac but those who are invited, or are known to be friends of the chief; and if a slave were to presume to do it, he would be punished with death.



The houses, for the most part, are surrounded and shaded with fruit and other trees of a thick foliage. Amongst these, the raven palm is the chief favourite, as well on account of its beauty, and the shade it affords, as for its usefulness. These give a picturesque and interesting appearance to the towns and villages, some of which are very large and populous, indicating altogether a state of society ready to give way to the most extended civilization as soon as its advantages are represented to them in a proper light, and illustrated by good examples. Experience has shewn, that without the latter, no good can be effected; for though the Madegasses are possessed of good sense, and a capability of reasoning, (as will be seen by perusing the following pages,) they can never be brought to believe that *that* system, whose votaries practise every species of fraud and violence, is in any degree superior to their own.\*

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\* "Are there any Spaniards in heaven?" said an indignant chief in the Island of Cuba, to a Spanish monk who was piously endeavouring to convert him to the Catholic faith, that he might afterwards roast him with more satisfaction for *having been a heathen!*—"Undoubtedly," replied the holy father, "all good Spaniards go there."—"Then I never will," answered the chief.

## CHAP. IV.

*Description of the Natives—Dress—Population—Character in regard to foreign Relations—Conduct of the French—Introduction of the Slave Trade—Its Influence—Domestic Character.*

THE natives of Madagascar are above the common stature\*, strong limbed, with the most exact symmetry of shape and figure. Their colour includes all the varieties between that of a dingy white, and the jet black of the negro, which is owing to the endless intermixture of the different tribes. By far the greater proportion, however, are of an olive complexion. The blacks have the woolly hair, thick lips, flat noses, and heavy features of the negroes of the coast of Africa, from whom they undoubtedly sprung: those whites who reside in Matatane, and who are all magicians or doctors, are excessively ugly; but the majority of the inhabitants are quite the reverse of this, having the prominent nose and regular features of Europeans. Their countenances are open and placid, bespeaking a contented, frank,

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\* During a war against the Seclaves, in which Benyowsky found himself obliged to engage, Hiavi, the chief of Foule Point, sent him twelve hundred and fifty warriors, all young men, *not one of whom were less than five feet eight inches and a half* in height; these formed the governor's body-guard.

and hospitable disposition. Their hair is long, black, and curling; their eyes quick and penetrating; and their foreheads broad and open, indicating a good share of intellectual capacity.

The women are, generally speaking, handsome: their shape is slender and delicate, their skin soft and glossy, and their teeth white and regular. The greater part of them have azure eyes, the pupil of which is brown and sparkling. The married women are known by the manner of wearing the hair, which they twist up in form of a bouquet on the top of the head. The unmarried women, and girls, suffer theirs to flow negligently over the shoulders.

The common dress of the men is simply a garment called a lamba, which is fastened round the middle, and reaches to the knees. This is made either of silk, cotton, or the filaments of the bark of the banana and several other trees. These latter are prepared by beating the bark in the same manner as we do hemp; it is then boiled in lye, and washed clean, and, when dry, twisted on spindles and woven; it resembles a strong European linen, and is more durable than cotton. They are chiefly worn by slaves. Persons of note amongst them, ornament themselves with gold and silver chains, rings, bracelets, earrings, necklaces, &c.; and the dress of the chiefs on public days is splendid. On such occasions, they take great pains in oiling and curling the hair to make it lie close, and often spend as much time with the friseur, as one of our Bond-street beaux

would do in preparing for a rout.\* Their best lambas are then put on, which are usually very handsome, being made of white cotton, very full, reaching to the feet, and having a deep border of silk, marked with black and red stripes, and trimmed with silk lace of the same colours. A silk cloak, or robe, is thrown over the shoulders, ornamented with chains of gold and beads, with a profusion of other ornaments, made of pearls, corals, precious stones, &c.

The dress of the women consists of a lamba, either of silk or cotton, which reaches to the feet. Above this, they wear a close garment that covers all the body from the neck, and is confined at the waist by the lamba. It is generally made of dark silk or cotton, and ornamented with beads, fancifully ranged

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\* An East-India ship, having on board a judge who was going to Bengal, touched at Madagascar. The king of the district where they landed, being invited on board, was received in due form, the judge appearing in character with his magnificent wig on. Unfortunately, that splendid and venerable ornament attracted the attention of the swarthy monarch, and he peremptorily insisted on having it. Unfortunately too, his lordship had but one wig, and as he was determined not to disgrace the seat of justice in a night-cap, he resolutely refused to give it up. In this awkward dilemma, the captain hit upon a lucky expedient, and promised his majesty that the (or rather a) wig should be forthcoming the next day. In the meanwhile, he ordered an ingenious sailor to weave, frizzle, and powder a handful of oakum, which was done to so good an imitation, that the next morning it was carried on shore with great solemnity and state; and his majesty's pate was covered with the hempen ornament, to the glory and delight of himself, and a large body of his subjects who were convened on the occasion.

in rows crossing each other. The ladies of quality wear, in addition, a beautiful kind of shawl, called a pagna, made either of silk, cotton, or the filaments of the raven-tree, divided into exceedingly fine threads. Both men and women go bare-headed and bare-footed, except in the province of Manghabei, where the men wear a square cap, and the women a hood, pointed at the top, and hanging down over the shoulders. In the province of Eringdrane, stuffs are manufactured from the banana, very fine and light; equal in beauty to those of silk, and wove in the same manner. The cotton cloths, made in the province of Anossi, are the most esteemed, being the finest and strongest that are to be found on the island.

The population of Madagascar is generally computed at about four millions; but Benyowsky, who was better acquainted with the northern provinces than his predecessors, estimates the number of males at two millions five hundred thousand, which, according to the usual proportions in other countries, makes the population much greater than we have stated. Taking it, however, at the utmost that his estimate will allow, it is very small in proportion to the extent of the island. But the operation of the slave-trade, and, still more, that of the practice of exposing their children, has effectually kept it down. The latter horrid practice, indeed, must annually have taken off such numbers, that instead of its exciting surprise that the inhabitants are so few, it is

more matter of wonder the island has not been entirely depopulated.

The character of the Madegasses has been so variously described by different authors, that it is no easy task to discriminate between truth and falsehood. Some have assured us that they are the worst of savages, committing the most horrid barbarities on those who unfortunately fall into their power; that they are treacherous, false, libidinous, and quarrelsome; that no faith can be kept with them, or any confidence placed in them; their word or their oath being equally invalid, whenever their interest or passions render it inconvenient to adhere to them.

Others, on the contrary, have asserted, that they possess all the amiable qualities of the most civilized people, and at the same time are destitute of their vices; that they are honest in their dealings, humane in their dispositions, temperate in their habits; constant in their friendship, generous to their enemies, and on no account violating the sanctity of an oath. However, in the history of their transactions with the French, the mystery is unravelled. Upon the first attempts of that people to colonize Madagascar, they found its inhabitants in many respects similar in character to other uncivilized tribes. Free, open, and unsuspecting, they received the strangers as brothers; and entertaining a high opinion of their superiority, they thought themselves greatly honoured in being permitted to assist them in forming their establishments

amongst them. But the settlers were men of bad principles. Instead of acting towards the hospitable and generous natives in such a way as to gain their esteem and respect, they practised every kind of fraud and violence\* upon them; and when this was resented, they endeavoured to reduce them by force of arms. Unaccustomed to encounter the regular discipline of European troops, the natives were soon subdued, and had no other means left to resist the invaders than artifice. Jealous of their liberty, which they plainly saw it was intended to sacrifice, they watched every opportunity of freeing themselves from the yoke, which became more and more insupportable, as the tyranny and ambition of the French led them to commit fresh acts of oppression; while every indication of impatience was punished with the utmost rigour, and the most arbitrary laws were imposed on them, by men who ought themselves to have leaned, at least, to the customs of the country. Thus mistrust, hatred, and revenge, were engendered, and the French, in the sequel, suffered the severe effects of their folly and baseness.

But the most important innovation that has taken place in consequence of their intercourse with the French, and which has tended more than anything else to alter and brutalize their character, is the introduction of the slave-trade. Painful, indeed, is it to

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\* It was no unusual thing for the French ships to fire their cannon upon the natives, when they were at all dilatory in furnishing the necessary supplies !

reflect, that nations who possess advantages calculated to raise them, in point of moral excellence, to the highest pitch of human greatness, should, in their intercourse with those, inferior to them in these respects, convert their superiority into the means of oppression and robbery; and instead of imparting to them those useful branches of knowledge, which would correct the errors of their savage mode of life, and give *full* effect to the natural advantages they already enjoy, should basely use the influence they have arbitrarily acquired, in exciting them to acts at which humanity shudders, and the better judgment even of savages revolts.

Several attempts were made by the French to introduce the slave-trade, both by force\* and argu-

\* Many flagrant instances are recorded by their own writers; two or three shall suffice.

When Captain Pronis was governor, he treacherously sold a great number of the natives, who had unsuspectingly engaged themselves in the service of the colony, to Vander Mester, the Dutch governor of the Mauritius. On another occasion, a party of free natives had *volunteered* to serve under the French in the East Indies, during a war there, and were conveyed thither by two French ships, under the command of Bourdonnais and Laly. At the close of the contest, the French governor in the East was so well satisfied with their valuable services, that he would by no means part with them, but *rewarded* them by reducing them to slavery.

The last instance we shall mention is unparelled, except in the history of the slave-trade. At the beginning of the 18th century, the crew of a French ship that lay off the coast of Madagascar, invited a great number of the natives to an enter-



ment, but they long failed to produce any effect; the Madegasses always shrunk back with horror at the idea of expatriating even those who were taken in war, and who, of course, for the time being at least, were considered as their worst enemies. And whenever forcible attempts were made upon their liberty, (of which they are not a little tenacious,) they shewed such a disposition to resist them, as convinced the French the time was not come that they might enslave them as they pleased. What force and argument failed to effect, stratagem accomplished; and in the sequel, the wily French succeeded in rendering the Madegasses subservient to their own degradation.

During one of their provincial wars, the combatants on one side had expended their ammunition; and (not reflecting on the consequences of so fatal a precedent) were prevailed on to exchange the prisoners they had taken, with an European captain, whose ship happened to lie at anchor on the coast, for fire-arms and gunpowder. The immediate effects of this step was, that all parties resorted to the same expedient, through the secret instigation of the French, who generally contrived to act as panders to both sides. From that unfortunate period, their domestic dissensions have been more frequent than ever, and

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tainment. A large tent was prepared for the occasion, which was no sooner filled, than the floor sunk under them, and they were ironed and carried off in triumph. Need we ask which were the savages?

are conducted with a spirit of ferocity and revenge unknown before\* ; for such is the horrible nature of the slave-trade, that wherever its operations extend, there is not a valuable quality in the human heart which it does not destroy or debase,—nor is there

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\* We have no desire to conceal the fact, that slavery existed previously on the island. The prisoners taken in battle were generally detained in that capacity ; but the treatment they met with was mild ; and in some of the provinces it was usual to adopt them into the family of the master, and no difference of treatment was made between them and the other branches of it. In other cases, many circumstances operated to enforce lenient conduct towards the slaves. The conviction that the fortune of war might possibly (and in point of fact it often did) place the owner of a slave in a state of captivity himself, acted as a principle of self-love, and insured to that slave such treatment, as he himself would expect, should he unfortunately fall into the hands of his enemies : and besides, from the continual intermarriages between the different tribes, it frequently happened, that a slave could find near relations even amongst his master's friends, who would not fail to interfere, in case he were ill-treated. The hope also of returning to his province, either by escape, recapture, or exchange, all of which frequently took place, softened the rigour of the servitude, and rendered it supportable.

But not so the slave-trade. A slave-ship or plantation is a “bourne from whence no traveller returns”—a bottomless pit, where hope never comes—a vortex that has swallowed up myriads of victims ; and, we fear, will continue to do so, till civilized Europe has learned the first principles of justice and humanity ! Every feeling mind must rejoice to hear that the enlightened (though swarthy) monarch of Madagascar has determined upon the entire abolition of the trade throughout the island. Let Frenchmen blush to find those they call savages more open to conviction, and more ready in the acknowledgment of the claims of humanity, than themselves.

a vicious passion that is not thereby called into exercise. It was not possible that the Madegasses should escape the foul contamination: brandy and gunpowder, the principal articles of barter with the slave captains, were liberally supplied, and gave fresh stimulus to their civil discords; while the vicious examples of the crews of the slave ships, who are generally men of dissolute and depraved habits, produced the most deplorable effects.

Thus was the infamous traffic in human flesh introduced into Madagascar, and ever since has it desolated that beautiful country; turning a garden into a wilderness, and the habitations of man into a retreat for wild beasts. The cultivation of the land has, in many instances, been entirely neglected, because the cultivators were uncertain whether they would be permitted to enjoy the fruits of their labour. At the same time the bitterest animosities were engendered between men of the same blood, which nothing but extermination was capable of satisfying. Savages have been rendered more savage, by the inculcation of new principles, which have, in their operation, burst asunder the most powerful claims of nature, in order to make room for the exercise of all the bad qualities that are latent in the human breast.

But a happy change has already been wrought by the partial abolition of this inhuman traffic; and if it be followed by the introduction of Christianity, and the arts of civil life, we may yet see Madagascar rising in the scale of nations, and exhibiting to the world in her

renovation, an example equal in moral greatness to that of any civilized country on earth.

Having thus considered their character, as influenced by their connection with Europeans, we shall now proceed to speak of it as illustrated in their domestic habits. Here every allowance must be made by the reader, for the circumstances in which he finds them ; and if, in some of the relations of domestic life, they fall far short of that pure standard of morals which he knows to be most conducive to the well-being of society, either individually or collectively, he must recollect, that he is reading of a people, who are but just emerging from an obscurity in which they have been involved, probably upwards of three thousand years ; during which period they have been wholly shut out from the advantages of civilized life, and, above all, of that revealed religion, which has conferred so many temporal as well as spiritual blessings on mankind : that during this long seclusion, a mass of prejudices and false opinions have been accumulating, to which time has imparted a strength and solidity that would for ever bid defiance to such ill-directed efforts, as have hitherto been made to overthrow them ; and that the specimens they have heretofore had, of the moral and civil habits of those foreigners who have visited them, have not been of a stamp to impart so favourable an idea of their superiority, as to induce them to relinquish their established usages, and adopt those of their invaders. Making these allowances, we think the reader will acknowledge,

that if, in some of the relations of life, the Madegasses fall below us, in others we cannot improve them ; and that we owe them but little resentment, if, on some occasions, they have indignantly flung on those who have invaded their rights, the epithet of savages\*, and declined all further intercourse with a set of lawless intruders, who, they believed, aimed at nothing less than the utter destruction of their customs and liberty.

The influence of climate and situation must be allowed to have great weight in the formation of character. In northern countries, where the necessities of life are procured at a great expence of labour, we find the inhabitants, in general, active, industrious, and careful. On the other hand, those who live under a milder sky, where Nature bestows her favours with a liberal hand, are supine, indolent, and improvident. Thus it is with the Madegasses. Placed, by an indulgent Providence, in a land literally flowing with milk and honey, where the means of existence, and even the luxuries of life, spring up gratuitously around them, they exhibit an easy, indolent disposition †, careless of futurity, and only desirous

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\* They long entertained the belief, that the Europeans ate the slaves they purchased, and they looked on them with horror, as cannibals.

† It is evident, however, that this indolence arises rather from absence of occupation, than from sluggishness ; for whenever an occasion for exertion presents itself, they do not shrink from either toil or danger. A celebrated traveller, in describing their character, represents them as “ one day sedentary,

of present gratification. Circumscribed in their ideas to the circle of relative and domestic concerns, they have but little exercise for reflection; and, when not engaged in husbandry, war, or amusements, they pass the time in sleep. In their habits they are temperate, and even abstemious. Want alone regulates their hours of meals, at which they take only what nature requires, except it be on particular occasions, such as a circumcision, conclusion of a treaty, or any other public affair. Their ordinary food consists of the natural produce of the island, principally rice, dressed in the simplest manner, and seasoned with white pepper; and they usually drink hot water, or broth from the boiled meats: wines, of which they make several kinds, are reserved for the entertainment of their friends on occasions of ceremony and festivity.

Towards those with whom they are in friendship, their conduct is humane, generous, and good-natured; nor will they attack strangers unprovoked.\* Even to their enemies, though cruel in the extreme when engaged in the conflict, and their passions are excited, they sometimes display a whimsical sort of mag-

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the next industrious cultivators of the ground, and the next warriors."

\* "I have frequently travelled," says the late General Burn, "for a whole day over the hills unarmed, and met them in the woods with their formidable spears, fully persuaded I had no ill treatment to fear. They would shake me by the hand in a familiar manner, jabber a few sentences in their language, and then, when they found we could not understand one another, walk on with a smile."—*Burn's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 18.

nanimity and commiseration ; for if it should happen that 'one party is suffering through a want of provisions, the other will send them a few bullocks, or a quantity of rice, to show that they excel them in generosity.

They are, notwithstanding, easily provoked, and quick in their resentments upon receiving any slight or injury ; and, on such occasions, they act with precipitation, and giving scope to their passion, frequently commit acts of cruelty, for which they afterwards express regret, and endeavour to atone.

Polygamy is practised throughout the island, and every man is allowed to keep as many wives as he can maintain ; but the first wife is always considered as superior to the rest, and the marriage ceremonies are observed only in her case, the others being looked upon as concubines. Contrary to the custom of most uncivilized tribes, the women are treated with great attention and tenderness. Indeed the men seem to enjoy the society of their wives in a high degree, and are always cheerful in their presence. The disposition of the women is easy, cheerful, and captivating ; and the deportment of those who are married, is, generally speaking, marked with modesty and decorum. Both men and women are allowed to separate at pleasure, and a restitution of dowry takes place on such occasions. Adultery is accounted equal in criminality to theft, and is punished by fining, according to the quality of the person aggrieved : but if the woman is the wife of a chief or king, the offending

parties are put to death according to their laws. They caution strangers to respect their wives, and to avoid treating them with levity or immodesty, but they offer them their daughters.

Their favourite amusements are singing and dancing; the women practise the former, and are very ready at extempore composition upon the slightest occasions: these songs are generally replete with satire or encomium; in the former they stigmatize unworthy actions, and, in the latter, celebrate good ones: the remarkable deeds of their forefathers form the frequent subject of their songs. These amusements, which generally occupy the evening, are conducted with propriety of behaviour, and a freedom from those excesses which too frequently attend those of more polished nations.

However much they may be addicted to plundering those with whom they are at war, amongst themselves their conduct is marked with a degree of honesty that would reflect honour on the most civilized people. No stronger proof of this can be given, than that they make no use of either bars, bolts, or locks, to their houses. Every precaution is taken to prevent being surprised by an enemy; and their towns and villages, as we have already observed, are doubly defended and guarded; but within their intrenchments, all is security and confidence, no further precaution being necessary than laying a few thorns at the door, or fastening it on the outside, to prevent the fowls or cattle from entering.



Their mental powers are considerable. As far as their information extends, their reasoning is sound and strong, and they are very ready in comprehending any new subject that is proposed to them. Some of their speakers are possessed of considerable eloquence, as will be evinced by a reference to their speeches, recorded in the historical part of this work. In delivering their sentiments, their periods are short; but their addresses are argumentative and conclusive, and well calculated to enforce conviction on the minds of an audience.

The sanctity of an oath is universally observed by them, and it is usual to resort to it whenever more than ordinary affirmation is required. The mode of administering it was, as they assure us, prescribed by their forefathers; and in no case where that form has been adhered to, was it ever known that a native of Madagascar has broken his oath. The treachery which the French settlers complained of, was the natural consequence of the lawless tyranny and oppression they practised upon them; they had no other means left to free themselves, and it must not be looked upon as a criterion of their character. That there are bad men in Madagascar, we do not attempt to deny; but such characters are treated with contempt there, as well as in more civilized countries, and the non-observance of an oath is held in abhorrence.

(They are much given to superstition, and are great observers of dreams, which they sometimes carry to a

ridiculous length.\* Witchcraft is greatly practised, especially in the province of Matatane, where magic is kept up in all its glory. The Ombiasses, or magicians, have acquired great influence over the people, who are much afraid of them on account of their supposed necromantic powers; nor dare they dispute their commands or assertions, though contrary to the evidence of their senses and the dictates of the plainest reason. Of this influence they make a very profitable use, by selling a kind of talisman, on slips of paper, written in the Arabic character, which are worn round the neck by the credulous people, who suppose they will preserve them from the influence of every kind of evil.

On the whole, we are led to conclude, from the foregoing sketch, that the Madegasses are a sensible and well-disposed people,—easy in their tempers,

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\* Drury mentions a remarkably ludicrous instance of this kind. A young man was ordered by his guardian spirit, in a dream, to go to his brother who was to *shoot* at him. In obedience to this nocturnal injunction, he posted off the next morning to his brother, acquainted him with his errand, and requested him without delay to execute the command. His brother endeavoured to dissuade him from his ridiculous determination, but to no purpose. “You must shoot at me,” said the fanatic, “or worse will come of it.” “Well, then, I will shoot towards you, and miss you.” Nothing, however, but a *bonâ-fide* shoot at him would satisfy the anxious devotee. Thus over-ruled, his brother loaded his piece, and standing about thirty yards off, fired low; but with all his care he broke one of his legs, and then reflecting on his own credulity, ran, lamenting, to assist him. In short, with the usual applications, and some *magical charms*, the leg was healed, but the young man carried the marks of his folly to his grave, in a stiff joint.

and, to their friends, generous, hospitable, and faithful. With no other guides than the light, and consequently the religion of nature, experience has taught them the necessity of fixed principles, to regulate their conduct and dealings with each other. But in the construction of these principles, no provision was made against the effects of a revengeful spirit; nor were their foundations sufficiently liberal and extended to meet the exigencies of the situation into which they have been thrown, by the attempts of foreigners to subjugate them. Something more was wanting to enable them to withstand the vicious examples and unprovoked aggressions of the invaders, without imitating the one, and revenging the other, by acts of treachery and barbarity. What has not the Christian religion done for mankind!—there is not a valuable principle in morals that it has not rendered more stable, nor in social life that it has not refined and softened. It is the oil that allays the stormy passions of the mind—the balm that soothes and attenuates the anxieties of life—the spring that regulates and perpetuates the benevolent feelings of the heart—the power which dispels the illusions of superstition and ignorance—and the barrier that prevents the accesses of vice and depravity. While it does not prohibit us from using the means of self-preservation, it enjoins on us mercy and forgiveness towards our enemies, an humane use of the means of self-defence, and a compassionate forbearance in the hour of victory.

## CHAP. V.

*Of the different Classes—The Zafe Rahimini—Their Subdivisions—Origin—Indigenous Blacks—Subdivisions—Origin of the Aborigines.*

ACCORDING to the most authentic accounts, the inhabitants of Madagascar consist of three distinct races; each of which are easily discernible, notwithstanding their continual intermixtures.

The first is that of the Whites, who inhabit the provinces of Anossi and Matatane, and who assert that they are descended from Imina, the mother of Mahomet, and they are in consequence called Zafe Rahimini.\*

The second, inhabiting the Isle of St. Mary, and the country round Foule Point and the Bay of Antongil, are called Zafe Hibrahim, or descendants of Abraham, who also are whites.

The third race comprises the Indigenous Blacks, who are to be considered as the aborigines.

The Zafe Rahimini are of Arabian extraction.

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\* Those whites who live in Matatane are all magicians, and are called Ombiasses. They have public schools for the purpose of teaching necromancy—they are also the writers and historians of Madagascar. They make use of the Arabic character, and teach both reading and writing in that language.

They discovered the island about two hundred and fifty years ago. Upon their arrival, the leader, or chief of the company, married a native woman, upon condition that the offspring of the union should be called Zafe Casimambou, after their father, which was contrary to the custom of the country. Their progeny were numerous; and in a short time they gained an ascendancy over their brethren. Upon the latter attempting to emancipate themselves, about one hundred and fifty years ago, they were all put to the sword, except the women and children, who had a district allotted to them, which they cultivated. These are called Ontampassemaca, or "People from the sandy deserts of Mecca."\*

Those of this race who inhabit Anossi, are divided into three classes, or orders;—the Rhoandrians, Anacandrians, and Ontzatsi.†

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\* Some writers have made a distinction between the whites of Anossi, and those of Matatane, upon the assumption that they arrived at two different periods; but the account they give is so confused, and, after all, the times of their arrival are so near to each other, that we have followed a writer of acknowledged correctness, and have considered the two as derived from the same stock, but rendered distinct by the marriage above referred to, and the consequent ambition and tyranny of its issue.

† The following account of the origin of the Zafe Rahimini, is an extract from a book written in the Madegasse language, called Fasiri, which was translated by order of Benyowsky, during the time he resided on the island.

Rahimini, father of Imina, the mother of Mahomet, had two sons, the elder of whom was named Ramini, and was a great prophet. He went to Mahomet at Mecca, but as he would not

The Rhoandrians are the first and most distinguished order; they are, in fact, the nobles of Madagascar. The kings are always chosen from amongst them, and are called Ampansacabe. They enjoy many privileges, and, amongst others, that of

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eat the flesh of beasts unless he had himself cut the throat of the animal, he irritated the disciples of Mahomet, who intended to spill his blood for introducing a new custom. But Mahomet saved his life by inspiration, and permitted him to cut the throats of the beasts he ate, and sometime afterwards gave him one of his daughters, named Farefatima, in marriage. Ramini then went with his wife to Mangalor, where he spent his life, and was an Ampansacabe. At his death, his son Rehanroad succeeded him, and married his sister: a son was the issue of this match, named Rahadzi, who also succeeded his father; but having a desire to visit the tombs of his ancestors at Palmir, he set out for that purpose, leaving his brother to supply his place during his absence. The latter proved treacherous, and giving out that his brother was only gone to make an act of profession of the Mahometan faith, gained over all the great men to his cause, and superseded his brother in the sovereignty. Rahadzi, being informed of this treachery, took the resolution of sailing in quest of an unknown land, and accordingly arrived at the island of Comoro, from whence he went to Madagascar, and landed at Manghabei, where he was kindly received, and married the daughter of one of the kings of the island. He had two children by her, the eldest of whom was chosen Ampansacabe—and his descendants, each in turn, succeeded him in that exalted office. Ramini Larizon was the last Ampansacabe, he being slain in war, and his two sons massacred on his tomb. There were many of the illegitimate offspring of this race when the French first went to Madagascar. They then had great power, but the French exterminated them all but one, who avenged their death by a general massacre of all the French in the country.

killing beasts, a business which is universally honoured among savages who subsist by the chase.

The Anacandrians are the offspring of a Rhoandrian and a woman of inferior rank, for which reason they have the privilege of killing beasts; their hair is long, hanging down in curls, and their complexion is of a reddish hue.

The Ontzatsi constitute the last class of Zafe Rahimini. They enjoy no privilege beyond that of killing a fowl; they derive their origin from the illegitimate offspring of the Anacandrians, and the sailors who came over with the Zafe Rahimini. They subsist chiefly by fishing, are accounted brave soldiers, and can fling a stone or a dart with unerring certainty. They also spend great part of their time in dancing and singing, and appear to live an easy careless life.

The Whites of Foule Point, who call themselves the descendants of Abraham, are sprung partly from the ancient pirates, and partly from the real Zafe Hibrahims; they enjoy no privileges, and are in some measure distinct from the other classes of society in the island.

The Indigenous Blacks comprise four classes; the Voadziri, the Lohavohitz, the Ontzoa, and the Ondeves. The first are said to trace their origin from the ancient sovereigns of the island. Their wealth in slaves and cattle is altogether considerable, and they are allowed the possession of several villages. Although superseded in the sovereignty by the race

of Ramini, it is evident that their descent is noble, since the natives still hold them in veneration; and they have the privilege, in common with the usurpers, of killing the beasts belonging to their subjects, provided they have the good fortune to arrive before a Rhoandrian or Anacandrian.\*

The Lohavohitz have much less power than the last-mentioned. They can never possess more than one village; and how great soever their wealth in slaves and cattle may be, they are not allowed, on any account whatever, to kill the animals that serve as food for themselves and their subjects; but must go and seek a Rhoandrian, be it ever so inconvenient.

The Ontzoa are nearly related to the former, but they possess no power, authority, or privilege whatever, except personal freedom.

The Ondeves are slaves by extraction; their name, in the Madegasse language, implies "a man undone!" These are "the hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the higher ranks, and are kept in entire subjection.†

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\* This privilege is no empty honour. It is attended with considerable profit; for the noble butcher is allowed to help himself to a part of the ox, or whatever animal he is killing.

† There is a piece of curious tradition current in Madagascar, respecting the origin of the several classes, corresponding with the foregoing subdivision. It was first promulgated by the Ombiasses, doubtless with a view to strengthen the power of the Zafe Ramini.

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Such are the gradations of rank in Madagascar; and in tracing the origin of the Zafe Rahimini, we have hitherto had some guide to direct us; but with respect to the aborigines, that question is involved in the greatest obscurity, and the opinions concerning it are almost as various as the persons who have written upon the subject: and after all that has been said, the entire absence of either authentic records, or probable tradition, leaves the matter still open to discussion. It is not our province to reconcile the conflicting opinions, much less to make a decision, when others, far better qualified for the task, both by talents and learning, have spoken with diffidence. We shall therefore state the leading opinions, with the arguments in their favour or against them, and then leave the further discussion of the subject for some abler pen.

The origin of the Madegasses, is, by the generality of

It asserts, that the Creator of heaven and earth drew from the body of the first man, while he was asleep, seven women, from whom the seven tribes descended.

The mother of the Rhoandrians was extracted from the brain of the first man.

That of the Anacandrians from his neck—and the Ontzatsi from his shoulder.

The Voadziri were derived from her who came out of his right side, while in a deep sleep.

The mother of the Lohavohitz sprung from the thigh.

That of the Ontzoa from the calf of the leg.

The poor Ondeves were, from the beginning, destined to be trodden down by their brethren. Their first mother was extracted from the sole of the foot of the first man !

writers, ascribed to the Jews: this idea is founded on the universal practice of circumcision amongst them, and from the title of "Descendants of Abraham" having been assumed by the inhabitants of St. Mary's Isle, and the coast opposite. But these circumstances by no means determine the point, it being well known that many of the eastern nations practise circumcision, who, it is certain, are not of Jewish extraction; and as to the title of "Descendants of Abraham," it would apply as well to the descendants of any other part of his family, (which was numerous, and all undoubtedly practised circumcision), as to those who sprung from Isaac.

But, we ask, what period of the Jewish history is assigned as the probable one at which the island was peopled by them? That it could not take place after the dispersion, is, we think, obvious; for, wherever that people have been found, their characteristics are so plain, that they may be distinguished without much difficulty. Believing, as they do, that the promised Messiah has still to make his appearance, and that their return to the Holy Land will precede or accompany his advent, they are found every where to hold themselves distinct from the nations and people around them,—regulated by different customs and laws,—tenacious of their religious rites and ceremonies,—and assuming to themselves the same high ground, as being exclusively "the people of God."

The same arguments, with many additional ones,

may be urged against the supposition of such an event taking place, during the residence of the Jews in the land of Canaan. That was the land of promise, to the possession of which their expectations were directed for near five hundred years, with an intenseness and ardour which amounted to enthusiasm. And after they had, with much toil and difficulty, taken possession of it, the happiness they enjoyed there, and the importance they attached to a residence in it, as the appointed theatre for the future fulfilment of prophecy, inspired them with the most enthusiastic patriotism, which was further strengthened, and a charm thrown over the whole, by the influence of a dispensation of religion peculiarly their own: and it is difficult to believe that any of them would abandon such a country, and such expectations, to sail in quest of an unknown land.

Neither is there any similarity between the religious or civil habits of the Madegasses and those of the Jews, except in the practice of circumcision;—they have neither customs, traditions, rites, nor ceremonies sufficiently analogous to justify us in assigning their origin to that people. It is well known that the Jews were greatly addicted to idolatry, notwithstanding the theocratic government under which they long lived. The splendour of the Mosaic dispensation held them in awful reverence only until something more pompous and splendid presented itself in the idolatrous rites and ceremonies of the heathen nations around them, which were presently adopted and mixed

up with their own system. But we never hear of their having gone back to natural religion, the simplicity of which afforded no charms to their minds,—reflected no glare upon their senses. Whereas, in Madagascar, the reverse is the case; there the worshippers have neither temples, sabbaths, priests, nor stated religious services; nor have they ever fallen into idolatry,—the Oli, or Teraphim, which they make use of in their prayers, being only the medium of communication. Their worship is confined to one God, and to Him alone their prayers and sacrifices are offered. In the latter, they for the most part offer females; whereas the Jews, in their burnt offerings, were strictly forbidden to offer any other than males.\* In mourning for the dead, the Madegasses shave their heads; a practice which also was forbidden to the Jews, who were severely reprov'd for adopting it.

There are two or three other circumstances which go far towards deciding the question with respect to the Jews, and, indeed, any other nation contemporary with that people. In their domestic economy the Madegasses make use of no animal to assist them in the labours of husbandry, or in carrying burthens. It is a very striking circumstance, that they should never have thought of using oxen as beasts of burthen. If at any period of their history the use of them had been known, (which must have been the

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\* In the Patriarchal ages there does not appear to have been any prohibition of the use of females in their burnt offerings.—See Gen. viii. 20, and xv. 9.

case if they had descended from the Jews), it would certainly have been perpetuated on the island by the influence of a principle common to all men, namely, a love of ease, and a wish to avoid labour. Neither have they any kind of vehicle going on wheels. These circumstances will, it is presumed, carry their origin back to a much earlier date than the Jewish history, or that of any of the civilized nations of antiquity, will admit of:—and had either of them been known to the original inhabitants, their essential value would have insured their transmission to succeeding generations. The knowledge of letters, too, was unknown till within the last three hundred and fifty years, when it was introduced into some of the provinces by the Arabs, who conquered the island. And, to conclude this negative evidence, the language which is spoken universally throughout the island (with only a provincial difference), bears no analogy to the Hebrew, but is a “mixture of Arabic and Greek, being agreeable to the latter in the manner of speaking, in the order and conjunction of nouns and verbs active, and in being extremely copious.”

Another opinion that has been advanced, is, that they owe their origin to one of the immediate descendants of Ham, the son of Noah; or, probably, to some part of Abraham’s family, which was numerous. This supposition appears to be much better supported than the former, being, in many respects, favoured by the habits and manners of the Madegasses. Their religion is evidently the most ancient in the world,

and in its simplicity bears some analogy to that of the Patriarchs, though debased by much superstition. Like them, every man is a priest and a judge in his own house\*, where he prepares the sacrifices, and offers up his prayers to "Unghorray," or, "the Most High God;" a name which corresponds with that given to the Divine Being in Genesis xiv. 18. The pastoral mode of life also, which universally prevails, is similar to that of the Patriarchs: like them, their riches chiefly consist in flocks and herds, there being no circulating medium in the island.

The recourse had to an oath (not profane swearing) on every extraordinary occasion, the reverence with which these appeals to the Deity are pronounced, and the sacrifice or feast by which it is accompanied or concluded, correspond with the custom in the Patriarchal ages; a remarkable instance of which occurs in the 31st chapter of Genesis, on occasion of the league between Jacob and Laban; when Jacob sware, "by the fear of his father, Isaac," not to pass the bounds prescribed; and the treaty was ratified with a sacrifice, or, as Josephus calls it, a feast.

The Oli, with which they invoke the spirits of the dead, is, in many respects, similar to the Teraphim used in the early ages after the Flood. It is asserted by some commentators, that the household gods, which

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\* On religious occasions, in which the public are concerned, their chiefs invariably perform the priestly offices, which also corresponds with the custom of the Patriarchs, as in the case of Melchizedek.—See Gen. xiv. 18, &c.

Rachael stole from her father Laban, were nothing more than Teraphim, which were kept for the purpose of invoking the guardian spirits, who were supposed to go in the night with messages or petitions to the Divine Being, and bring back answers. This is the use ascribed to them by the Jewish cabalists; and it exactly corresponds with that assigned by the Madegasses to the Oli. The Jews were strictly forbidden to follow the examples of the nations around them (and indeed their own ancestors) in this superstitious practice, which they could not be deterred from, though frequently reprov'd by their prophets on account of it. The reader's mind will doubtless recur to the instance of Micah, (see the 18th and 19th chapters of Judges,) who had in his house two images, an Epod and a Teraphim, which shews that they did not confine themselves to the use of the two latter, but connected other idolatrous rites, borrowed from the heathen around them.

The chief difficulty, which presents itself in the way of this opinion, is, the question how the descendants of Ham, or of Abraham, could get to Madagascar at that early period, when the art of ship-building could be but very imperfectly known. But this difficulty will vanish, when it is considered that the ark was in existence in Ham's time, and for many ages after, and consequently his children had a model to work by. It is certain, that the children of Japheth peopled the islands in the Mediterranean, as early as Abraham's time; and the children of Ham also were dispersed

abroad, round the coasts of Africa ; from whence, supposing them to possess the art of ship-building, they might easily transport themselves to Madagascar. Their colour, which is similar to that of the Egyptians and Abyssinians, renders it evident, that they came from Africa ; and the vicinity of the island to the coast of that quarter of the globe, rather than to any other, puts the matter out of doubt ; while the foregoing arguments render it extremely probable, that their arrival took place at a very remote period, long before the Israelites were in bondage in Egypt, or any of the polished nations of antiquity were in existence.\*

These are the opinions on this interesting subject, which we have considered as most worthy of notice. And if we admit the latter to be correct, what reflections does the situation of these poor islanders suggest to the mind of a Christian ! We are here introduced to a race of men, who, for nearly four thousand years, have been separated from the rest of the world, and shut up in a state of mental darkness and ignorance ;

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\* To the foregoing opinion, the writer would beg leave to add a suggestion on the subject ; namely, whether the Madagassians do not owe their descent to two sources ? Is it not probable, that while those of an olive complexion, who constitute the bulk of the population, may have descended from the family of Ham, those denominated “ the descendants of Abraham ” were actually his children, descended *collaterally* with the others ; and having arrived at the island at the same period, separated, as was usual at that early age, in order to constitute different tribes ? It is with this impression the writer has ventured to separate them in this chapter.



whose progenitors, though contemporary with the founders of true religion, and originally uniting with them in its sacred observances, have not, in their descendants, shared the benefits of its influence; but, having simply received the knowledge of one God, and adopted the seal of the covenant after the example of the "Father of the Faithful," were from thenceforth cut off from all further intercourse with his collateral descendants, and consigned to the gloomy regions of heathen superstition. On them the glorious revelation under the Mosaic, and still more glorious under the Christian dispensation, have never shed their light. To them did not "pertain the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;" nor have they been partakers of the blessings of that Gospel, which is "the power of God unto salvation." The thunders of Sinai have never awed their minds into obedience; nor has the persuasive voice of the Redeemer of mankind ever melted their hearts with divine love; yet, in the midst of an accumulating mass of error and superstition, we find them adhering, with inflexible constancy, to the grand principle on which all true religion is founded—the acknowledgment of one God, to the exclusion of idols: their moral state calls aloud for the sympathy of the Christian world; and we trust no exertions will be spared, to convey to them the knowledge of that religion, which alone can dispel their errors, regulate their conduct, and reform their hearts.

## CHAP. VI.

*Religion—Object of Faith—Belief in one God—In a World of Spirits—Immortality of the Soul—Notion of the Sun—Creation of the World—A Day of Rest allowed—Mode of Worship—Sacrifices in Sickness—In cases of Derangement—Burial of the Dead—Circumcision—Exposing Children to Destruction.—Conclusion.*

THE subject of religion has, in some degree, been anticipated in the preceding chapter; and as the Appendix will contain an account of the present state of the island, as it respects the influence their religious sentiments possess over their minds, and the probable effects of the introduction of Christianity; we shall, in this section, merely give the outline of their faith, and its illustration in their mode of worship, postponing the further discussion of it till we enter upon that part of the work.

They acknowledge one only true God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and the Supreme Ruler of the universe. This Great Being they call “Unghorray,” or “Zanharé\*,” which signifies “the Highest God,”

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\* The former is the orthography of Drury, who resided many years amongst them; the latter, that of the French writers. Their difference is little more than apparent; for if the Z be

or "the God above." They believe him to possess infinite power, but consider him too great a Being, and too powerful, to condescend to attend to the concerns of mortals, or to reveal himself to any of his creatures: they therefore suppose, that four inferior spirits are appointed, to whom are delegated the affairs of this world. These are denominated the Lords of the North, South, West, and East. The last is supposed to be the dispenser of plagues and miseries to mankind, by the command of the Great God—the other three are employed in the dispensation of benefits. Believing that these four spirits are powerful intermediate beings, possessing great influence with the Deity, they profess a high veneration for them, and recommend themselves to them in their prayers and sacrifices; but they by no means worship them, or any other being, except the Deity, who alone is the object of their prayers and sacrifices.\*

Besides these four, they have great faith in a *world* of spirits, and believe that every family has its guardian angel, which is generally supposed to be the soul of a particular ancestor: these are considered as

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omitted, or slightly slipped over at the beginning of the French word, they would pronounce it nearly the same as we pronounce Unghorray; and the orthography of the latter is more agreeable to that of the Madecasse language in general.

\* This circumstance is worthy of particular notice, as it is, we believe, *unparalleled in the history of the heathen world*; and it greatly heightens the interest their present critical situation, with respect to religion, is calculated to excite.

the messengers, who convey their prayers to the four great Lords; as the medium of access to the Deity. These guardian angels are also represented in their domestic worship, by a sort of Teraphim, called *Olis*\*, which are used on almost every occasion in their domestic arrangements, and are frequently worn by the heads of families, as a preservative from evil.

They believe in the immortality of the soul, and that, after death, it returns to *Zanharé*; but they have no idea of future punishment, or that the soul can suffer evil after its separation from the body: they believe that bad men will be punished in this world, by a complication of misfortune; and that the good will be rewarded by a good state of health, constancy of his friends, increase of fortune, and obedience of children.

They look upon the sun as a glorious body, and, as some have supposed, as a spiritual being; but created and dependent: they frequently gaze at it with wonder, if not with adoration, but offer no prayers to it. They consider it as the source of all their personal enjoyments; but ascribe that source to a superior Power, and therefore address their ascriptions of praise to Him alone.

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\* The *Oli* is made of small pieces of wood, neatly joined together, in the form of a half-moon, with the horns downward, and between the points are two alligators' teeth. It is fancifully adorned with beads of different colours, and a sash is fastened to it at the back, for the purpose of tying it round the person who makes use of it.

Their faith, relating to the creation of the world, is in some respects analogous to the Mosaic account, but mingled with much falsehood. They believe that God, having created heaven, earth, and all creatures, placed Adam; whom he formed out of the earth, in Paradise, which they suppose to be in the Sun. Adam, having no necessity, was forbidden to eat and drink. Paradise, they say, was watered by four rivers; one of milk, another of wine, a third of honey, and a fourth of oil, and abounded with great plenty of all sorts of fruit. The evil spirit, by cunning and craft, finding Adam in Paradise, asked the reason why he ate not of those fine fruits and oil, and why he drank not of that fine wine and milk? Adam answered, he had been prohibited by God, and wanted not nourishment to support life; upon which the devil retired, and after waiting two hours, returned, and acquainted Adam that he came from God, to give him leave to eat what he pleased. Adam, being thus tempted, ate; and, upon digestion, was guilty of an impropriety in Paradise. The devil then complained to God of his insolence and filthiness, who immediately drove him out of Paradise, and sent him into a country, where an imposthume grew in the calf of his leg, which burst in six months, and produced a girl; whereupon he sent a message to God, to know what he should do; who answered, that he must bring her up, and marry her when she came to a certain age; which he did, and called her Rokouna, or Eve. She brought him two sons—Cain and Abel,

who, when grown up, destroyed each other through an artifice of the devil. They add, that Adam had many children, who increased greatly, became wicked, and refused to acknowledge God ; that thereupon he sent a deluge on the earth, after he had commanded Noah to build a ship, and retire to it with his wife and children, relations and domestics, with male and female of every species ; that they had no sooner entered, than the earth, with the remaining animals, was buried under the waters of the deluge, excepting the four following mountains :—Zabalicaf in the north, Zabalicatoure in the south, Zabaliraf in the west, and Zabalibazane in the east : no persons, however, could save themselves from death on these mountains. After the deluge, Noah went out of the ship to live at Jerusalem, and from thence to Mecca, where he received from God, writings, containing his law. They have likewise some tradition concerning Jesus Christ ; but these traditional accounts of the histories recorded in Scripture, are confined principally to the Zafe Gasimambous and the Ontampassimaca of the province of Matatane and Anossi : it is therefore evident they were introduced by the Mahometans.

We have seen some accounts which state, that the inhabitants of St. Mary Isle, and the rest of the Zafe Hibrahim, refrain from work on the Sabbath ; believing that otherwise they would be wounded or attacked by sickness : that they also acknowledged Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David ; but have no knowledge of Jesus Christ, or any of the prophets,

being, in all other respects, similar to the rest of the islanders. With regard to their observance of the Sabbath, most travellers who have written on the subject assure us, that though a remission of labour is universally allowed to their slaves occasionally, no particular day is set apart for it there more than in the other provinces : it rests entirely with the humanity of the masters ; and, while some allow one day in each week, others extend it to ten days or a fortnight ; and in no case is the day devoted to religious services, as the Sabbath is amongst Christians and Jews.

The knowledge they have of Noah and Abraham is obviously accounted for ; and as to that which they profess of Moses and David, they may have derived it (as well as the account of the creation) from the Mahometans, from whom also they have learned to abstain from swine's flesh. Certainly the inference drawn from these circumstances, even if they are correct, is not a necessary one ; namely, that they descend from the Jews.

The worship, which is founded upon the foregoing system of faith, is purely spontaneous, having neither divine nor moral law, nor even the shadow of revelation to enforce it : nor does it appear that innovations have taken place from their intercourse with other nations ; but that in this particular, as well as in their other customs and manners, they retain the same forms and sentiments as were practised and entertained by their forefathers in ages of remotest antiquity. Their prayers and addresses to the Deity are confined to periods of

sickness, distress, accidents, and the like ; but *appeals* are made to Him on all ceremonial occasions, where more than ordinary solemnity is requisite.

In sickness, frequent prayers are offered up, both by the sufferer and his friends ; and if it be severe or of long continuance, a sacrifice is offered. On such occasions, an ox being procured, is brought to the spot at sun-set, and a sort of altar being erected, the nearest relative of the sick man slays the victim ; the blood is then sprinkled about the altar, the head is placed at the foot of it, and the caul and entrails burnt in the fire upon it. During this ceremony, the sick man sits near, in a supplicating posture, and generally prays with great fervour. The ceremony is finished by the sacrificer cutting up the ox and distributing it amongst the poor slaves of the sick man, reserving, however, the best pieces for himself.

If a person is seized with derangement, they immediately send for an Ombiasse, who is to fetch Understanding from the sepulchre (Amounouque) of the patient's forefathers. To this place he repairs by night, opens the monument or tomb, and, placing a cap over the aperture, invokes the soul of the disordered person's father or grandfather, and demands understanding for his helpless son. The aperture is instantly closed, and the conjurer returns to the maniac, declares his success, and places the cap on his head ; and if he recover, he and his friends are generally weak enough to ascribe his recovery to the great



skill of the impostor, and liberally reward him with presents.

The burial of the dead is a religious occasion, and is conducted with peculiar ceremonies. Upon the decease of a person, the nearest relatives are invited to the house; the hair and beards of the men being shaved, and a cap placed on the heads of the women in token of mourning, they first wash the body, and then adorn it with bracelets, rings, and chains of gold, set with coral and other ornaments, wrapping round it several pieces of the finest cloths: then the parents, friends and slaves assemble round the corpse in a body, and bemoan the deceased with great lamentations; the women alternately bewailing and dancing, and the men performing exercises of arms; while another party, in an adjoining apartment, extol the praises of the deceased, proclaim his public loss, speak to him as if living, and ask the reason of his dying;—whether he had not gold, silver, iron, cattle, slaves, or riches sufficient? The first day is spent in this tragi-comic interchange of grief and mirth, and the whole company is entertained at night. A tree is next selected for the coffin, and, a cow or ox being killed, some of the blood is sprinkled upon the tree, and prayers are offered up that it may not split, or hurt any one in falling. Being cut about a foot longer than the corpse, it is split down the middle and scooped out, after which it is fit for use; and the corpse being deposited in it, and fastened down, it is carried by six men to the Amounouque, or sepulchre, belonging

to the family of the deceased\*, which is generally well fenced in with a palisade of bamboo, and a strong house is erected in the middle, under which the dead are deposited. The corpse being set down on the outside, four fires are made at the four corners of the cemetery; on these they consume an ox, previously killed for the purpose, sprinkling frankincense on the ashes. The head of the family then goes to the gate of the sepulchre, halloos several times very loud, and calls upon all the dead deposited there, beginning with the first, and ending at the last interred, telling them they have brought a relation to lie amongst them, and hope they will receive him as a friend: two or three persons then go in and dig the grave, and the corpse is instantly interred without further ceremony. In fifteen days, more sacrifices are made, and provisions are sent to the defunct, as if he were yet alive; the heads of the immolated victims being fixed upon poles, and set round the tomb. They also frequently repair thither in cases of sickness or distress, offering prayers and sacrifices; at the same time invoking the aid of the mouldering inhabitants, exclaiming, "Thou such an one art now in heaven, give us help in this trouble."

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\* Every family in Madagascar, of any consequence, has its burying-place, which is held sacred, no person daring to infringe upon or break into it. The fear of incurring the resentments of the dead and the evil demons, who are supposed to hover around it, is a sufficient safeguard to the sanctity of the sepulchre even of an enemy.

When a person of rank dies at a distance from his own home, the head is cut off, and conveyed thither, and the corpse is buried upon the spot. On the same principle, the bodies of those slain in war are dug up in time of peace, and translated to the tombs of their ancestors, amongst whom they are enrolled in the religious recollections of their relatives: for the memory of the dead is held in the highest veneration, which is manifest on every serious occasion; and their most solemn oath is to swear by the souls of their ancestors.

Circumcision is celebrated with great solemnity, and generally performed in the month of May. The preparations commence some weeks beforehand, in the making of toak (or mead.) Several tubs of this liquor are brewed, and a shed or hut built for its reception. When the day is appointed, notice of it is sent to invite the relations and friends; and the festival commences a day or two before, with the blowing of horns and beating of drums, which continue night and day. The toak is tapped, and liberally distributed amongst the visitors, who generally drink to excess. All kinds of sports are practised on this occasion; and the chief of the village gives an entertainment, at which those who drink the most are considered to have done the greatest honour to the feast. Two hundred head of cattle are sometimes slain for the feast, and eaten, together with their hides. When the day arrives on which the rite is to be performed, a bull and some oxen are driven

to the spot, and their legs being tied, they are thrown on the ground. It is usual for the relations to present an ox or bull for each child ; but if the parents are poor, that is dispensed with. A profound silence is observed, and every person is at his post : the parents are occupied in preparing their children ; the mothers sleeping with them the night before in the lapa, or church, which was built some time previous by the fathers and uncles of the children who are to be circumcised. Being all assembled, the circumciser makes a speech, usually to the following effect :—

“ I respect thee, my God—I unite myself to thee by prayer. I ask thy pardon for my sins ; thou hast created feet and hands ; I prostrate myself before thee ; I this day circumcise this child,” &c. The children are then dressed up with beads and other trinkets, and a skein of cotton thread, which is used in the ceremony, is laid on its head. No food is taken on the morning of the festival by the parties concerned : and ten o’clock is the hour when every thing is in readiness. They are governed by the shadow of a man, who stands upright before the sun, to observe the critical minute for the execution of the rite. On these occasions they measure by feet, and the precise signal for the circumcision, is, when the shadow is nine feet long : then the drums begin beating, and the circumciser puts on his richest garment. The fathers walk in procession across the lapa, or church, with their children under their arms, entering at the west, and going out at the east door :

they then walk twice round the cattle which are destined for the sacrifice, make the children lie a little on their backs, and touch with their left hand the right horn of each ox or bull, which lie on the ground, with their feet tied, ready to be immolated. The ceremony is performed in silence, it being esteemed holy and sacred by every individual ; but when it is over, the thatch is stripped from the toak-house, and the bulls and oxen are slaughtered for the entertainment of the visitors. Before the men begin to drink, their weapons are taken from them for fear of accidents, and the most noisy, riotous mirth continues till the liquor is expended, or intoxication has rendered the company incapable of further exertion.

But the most horrid and execrable feature in their ritual, remains to be related ; the observance of which can only be accounted for on the general principle, that man, when left to the dictates of natural reason, is liable to fall into the most dreadful errors. A revelation from God was absolutely necessary to remedy this, and to preserve mankind, not only from the commission of those acts against which reason and conscience cry out ; but also from carrying even their devotional feelings to excess,—from suffering those fears, which are excited by the erroneous view that misguided reason takes of the attributes and perfections of Deity, so far to overcome the judgment, as to suggest the necessity of the most unnatural sacrifices, in order to expiate transgression, and appease the anger of God. Thus, when under their

influence, reason says, "Thou must give thy first-born for thy transgression—the fruit of thy body for the sin of thy soul." Revelation interposes with the injunction—"Thou shalt not kill;" proving, that with such sacrifices God is not well pleased.

How long the custom of exposing their children to certain destruction has existed in Madagascar, is not recorded\*; but it is the most dreadful of all the evils that superstition has entailed upon that island, and is the true reason why it is so thinly inhabited, although one of the largest and most fertile islands in the world. The condemnation of these little innocents is determined by the Ombiasses, who, for private emolument, contemplate the aspect of the planets at the time of

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\* It is, however, hardly a question, we presume, whether the idea of sacrificing children was first suggested by the circumstance (recorded in the 22d chapter of Genesis) of Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac, in obedience to the command of God: but the adoption of it as a precedent, shows how little reason alone can do for us, in discerning the will of God. One great inference to be drawn from that extraordinary history is, that such unnatural sacrifices are totally uncalled for on our part, and are in direct opposition to the divine will. The main object undoubtedly was, to typify the sacrifice of Christ, by shewing that such a sacrifice was necessary, in order to put away sin:—The second object, that it is not the province of man to make such a sacrifice; and Abraham appears to have referred to this, when he said, "God will provide *himself* a lamb for a burnt offering:" as if the Almighty had said, "I have now tried thy faith, and found it equal to the most difficult occasion. Behold at hand, an inferior animal for sacrifice; and learn from hence, that while I have created these for thy use, the life of thine own species is not required of *thee*; for no sacrifice of *thine*, which involves its destruction, is acceptable to me."

their birth ; and, according to the result of their observations, arbitrarily decree their future fate. The unfortunate months are March and April: the eighth day, and last week of every month, are equally inauspicious : Wednesday and Friday in each week are also unhappy days ; and even hours are influenced by a bad aspect of an unlucky planet. Thus, during nearly half the year, is the race of human beings devoted to destruction, and the population attacked at its very source. The usual methods of accomplishing the horrid deed, are, exposing them in the woods to the teeth of ferocious animals, and drowning : the former is the most practised.

Parental affection, however, sometimes gets the better of their superstitious fears, and breaks through the chains with which nature is fettered by a heathen education. In pursuance of its dictates, slaves are often employed to save the children from destruction, by conveying them secretly to some remote spot in the woods, where they are nourished and brought up ; while sacrifices of oxen and fowls are made, in order to take off the malignity of the predominant star, which they believe would follow the child through life, were they to neglect these customary and superstitious practices.

Such is the religion of the Madegasses ; and such is human nature, when left to the guidance of reason, without the aid of divine revelation. In all countries, and all ages, mankind are the same under similar circumstances ; and whatever superiority we perceive

in one over another, it may be traced to one source—the influence of the Spirit of God upon the heart.

Conscious of a principle of existence, superior to that of other animals around him, man carries his views beyond this life, the idea of the immortality of the soul being almost a natural consequence of that consciousness; while the belief of a great first cause is the necessary result of even a slight reflection on the nature of things, which precludes the possibility of self-creation.\* The mind then reverts to the obligations and the reverence due to so great a Being, whose perfections must be infinite; and the appearance of those evils which afflict the human race being looked upon as indications of his anger, the necessity of sacrifices, in order to avert them, is suggested.

Such is the process by which the votaries of superstition arrive at the height of their delusion; and hence those barbarous rites, which stamp the character of uncivilized nations with ferocity. But the delusion lasts no longer than the darkness which nourishes it.

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\* We are apparently arguing upon the presumption, that a people may exist, whose progenitors, at no period of the world, were acquainted, by revelation, with the existence of a first cause. But we cannot believe this possible, if we receive the Old Testament history; and, therefore, we wish to be understood, as speaking of a people, who, by the lapse of a long series of ages, have lost all traces of such a revelation; and, having no established religion to fetter them, are left entirely to the light of nature, and the guidance of reason; and, by consequence, to the operations of their own minds and consciences.



Let but one ray of divine light break in upon the gloom, and the spell that bound them is dissolved. We then see the ancient Britons demolishing their Druidical temples, and foregoing their bloody sacrifices—the hardy Greenlanders shaking off their frigid indifference—the natives of India renouncing their caste and their penances—and Otabeite burning her gods. And we trust the day is not far distant, when Madagascar too shall be free'd :—when the Unknown God, whom her children ignorantly worship, and the mysteries of redemption, shall be irresistibly revealed to them in all their glory. We shall then see plenty crowning their harvests—peace flowing through her like a river—her chiefs respecting the rights of their neighbours—and her mothers no longer the murderers of their tender offspring ; but training them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Thus will they be again united to that church from which, for so long a series of ages they have been separated, and the glory of God promoted, in the salvation of thousands yet unborn.

## CHAP. VIII.

*General Characteristic—Mode of Living—Furniture—Musical Instruments—Dancing—Social Habits—Diversions—Hunting Buffaloes, Wild Boars, and Alligators—Fishing—Treatment of Run-away Slaves—Riches—Astronomy—Language—Omblashes—Mode of Reckoning.*

THE characteristic feature in the history of this extraordinary people, whether we consider them in their personal, relative, or domestic habits, is simplicity. The examples of their forefathers appear to constitute, with them, a sanction of every thing relating to their mode of action and living; and though innovations have crept into some of the provinces, in consequence of their intercourse with the French, it has been rather by constraint than willingly. And even these, instead of imparting their character to the people to the full extent, have been made to assume a portion of the general feature we have just referred to.

Their manner of living we have before spoken of; the usual hour of dinner is ten o'clock in the morning, and that of supper four in the afternoon. Although we have described them as very abstemious, we by no means wish to convey the idea, that they are des-

titute of the knowledge of good eating and drinking. On the contrary, they can (and do) furnish a table with all the luxuries that even a London Alderman could wish for. Good beef and mutton, game of every description, and the most delicious fish, (not excepting turtle,) are to be had gratis, by those who will take the trouble of catching them. They practise only two methods of cooking :—they either boil their food in earthen pots (which they manufacture in a masterly way), or they broil them on the coals. Their dishes are seasoned with pimento, ginger, pepper, saffron, and aromatic herbs, and are served up on the leaves of the *raven palm*, which are also used as plates : these are always clean, being never used more than once.

The furniture of their houses, in common, is neither very expensive, nor would an European consider them as sufficiently conducive to his comfort. Their floors are covered with red and yellow rush mats, neatly put together. Those of Manghabei are both soft and strong. On these mats they repose, without bed, bolster, pillow, or covering of any sort ; a log of wood is placed under the mat to prevent the inconvenience arising from a termination of blood to the head. Their clothes, girdles, cotton, effects and ornaments, are kept in baskets ; and the oils they make use of for the hair and body, in earthen pitchers. Their kitchen furniture consists of earthen vessels, (called villangues, louvies, fases, monhonges, and sines,) wooden dishes and spoons, calabashes for

water, knives, gridirons, and forks, mortars for the pounding of rice, troughs and winnowing fans, and large vessels to hold the different kinds of wines.

The leaves of rates twelve feet long, and four broad, are used as table-cloths; these are laid upon the mats spread on the floor, tables and chairs being luxuries that have not yet found their way into the domestic economy, except amongst the higher orders. Some of these have their houses furnished in a very commodious and elegant manner. Our Missionaries, who have recently visited the island, were struck with astonishment, on entering the apartments of the Palace of Radama, at seeing the splendour of the mirrors, which were of steel, and the general elegance and spaciousness of the rooms.

Their musical instruments are but few in number. A drum, a kind of violin called herraovou, another something like a lyre (valihou), and a nondescript instrument called voule, which is made of bamboos, constitute all the native music of the island. Those who perform on the second are the most esteemed, and receive great applause in their public assemblies.

Dancing, as we have before observed, forms a favourite amusement with them. This is conducted by the inhabitants on the coast of Matatane, in a different manner from the rest of the islanders. They observe a cadence and time, dance in pairs, and perform all their evolutions in a pleasing and graceful manner. In times of war, the women keep up con-

tinual dancing, believing that it animates the courage, and increases the strength of their husbands.

Those who are on friendly terms with each other, are very sociable in their habits. They frequently visit each other, and keep up that kind of intercourse which is calculated to strengthen both parties; lending and borrowing provisions in times of temporary scarcity, and rendering prompt assistance on every trying occasion. When they meet at each other's houses, their amusements consist in the chase, and in calling upon the neighbouring chiefs; and when in doors, they recount the deeds of their ancestors, which are handed down from father to son, and form the principal object of their invitation, and fund of conversation. They also consult together, how they shall annoy their enemies, and lay their plans for future expeditions. They entertain each other in a sumptuous manner, if a late war have not desolated the province. On these occasions, their wine is liberally dispensed, and songs, dancing, and merriment, are kept up with great spirit.

The chiefs never go out without a fowling-piece, and a stick tipped with iron, the other end of which is ornamented with a tuft of cow's hair. They seldom move out for mere exercise or amusement, considering it quite unnecessary to add to the common fatigues of life. The slaves do the chief part of the work, though on some occasions, when more haste than ordinary is required, (as is the case after an invasion from a neighbouring enemy, when the rice and corn

grounds are generally demolished,) the masters will set all hands to work, not excepting his own, in order to get ready a piece of ground for a fresh planting or sowing.

The favourite amusements amongst the men, are hunting and fishing. In practising the former, they pursue the wild oxen and buffaloes, boars, foxes, and other wild animals that inhabit the woods. Their method of hunting the buffaloes is as follows :—They choose a dark night for the occasion, and after taking the precaution of washing to cleanse themselves from the smell of smook or perspiration, they sally forth in as quiet a manner as possible, those crafty animals being always upon their guard, and listening for an enemy. As soon as the hunters have discovered the herd, to which they are directed by their roaring, they take a circuitous route till they get them to the windward, when they walk towards them as softly as possible, some of the company pulling the tops of the grass in imitation of the cropping of a cow. When, by means of this stratagem, they have got near them, they creep cautiously in amongst the herd under cover of the bushes, till getting within reach of one they think fat, they strike a lance into its belly. The wounded animal gives a spring, and bellows as if another of the herd had run its horns against it, which so commonly happens, that the rest are not alarmed by it. In this manner they strike as many of them as they want, and retire in the same cautious way as they came.

It would be dangerous to discover themselves to the herd in the night, as the wounded ones would attack any man they could get at. The next morning they go in quest of their game, which they generally find dead near the spot, being guided to them by their blood. Notwithstanding their ferocity, the natives assert that the cows will stand to have their dugs handled, and have even been milked into a horn in the dark. In some of the provinces these wild oxen and buffaloes are exceedingly numerous.\*

The hunting of wild boars also forms a favourite amusement with the chiefs and farmers: these animals take refuge in a thicket, or jungle, which the hunters and their dogs beset round. The passages to the retreat are generally defended by huge boars, very savage and fierce, and who will fight desperately. During the attack, the grunting and squeaking of the swine, the yelping of the dogs, and the cheers of the hunters, raise such a chorus, and make the woods

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\* Drury says, that in one of the provinces there were, during the time he was on the island, (which was the beginning of the last century), a breed of wild oxen, called Hattoy's cattle. The tradition concerning their origin, which he relates, is, that these cattle belonged originally to a great man, named Rer Hattoye, who, being of a covetous disposition, would kill none of them, but suffered them to increase and rove about unconstrained. He lived in a forest, but his family and people, after his death, went to reside with a king of an inland province, called Untomaroche, and left their cattle behind. These cattle were similar to our English oxen.—*Drury*, p. 288.

resound to that degree, that the music of a pack of harriers is not to be compared to it. At length the hunters, with their hatchets, cut a passage behind the thicket, and having perceived the drove, fire in amongst them. Being thus attacked at all points, and a breach made in their line of defence, they have no other resource left than to fight their way through the hunters and dogs, and run for it, with the latter yelping at their heels. A great many are sometimes killed in this way, but it is rather for the sport, and for the sake of destroying them, on account of the injury they sustain by them, than for the value of their carcasses; for they will scarcely ever touch them as food.

Some of these expeditions occupy many days, and even two or three weeks; and they go out upon them a long way from home. On these occasions they build temporary huts, and as they can always find plenty of good edible roots, and are well supplied with beef by the chase, this mode of life is by no means unpleasant in that mild climate. Their method of cooking their meat, when upon a hunting expedition, is as follows:—a hole is dug about five feet long, two feet wide, and three deep; this is filled with dry wood and set fire to: on the top of the fire they put large stones; when the fire is burnt to embers, they place sticks across to lay the beef on, and the stones, which by this time are red hot, are placed round the sides and at the bottom of the trench. Some more sticks are then placed across,



and a cover, made of the inner bark of a tree, is laid over the whole. The meat thus baked is as well done as if it had been roasted.

Alligator hunting is also much practised as a diversion. The most usual method of attacking them is with a harpoon. They paddle along the water in their piroguas towards the alligator, who is usually discovered with his nose above the water, like a piece of cow-dung. When they get within ten or twelve yards, he sinks to the bottom, and crawls some distance before he stops; his path is discovered by the bubbles which rise to the surface, and where the last bubble stands, the hunters strike with the harpoon; for when they are thus approached, they lie flat upon their bellies with their sides pressed out. If the harpoon happen to strike the head, or middle of the back, it makes no entrance. Sometimes they take them with a net of ropes, and not unfrequently, with a snare made of rope, and fastened to a spring pole; these are placed at the mouths of rivulets.

They fish with well-baskets, harpoons, draw-nets, and hooks, both in the lakes and rivers, and at sea. Great quantities of fish are taken, and either exchanged for rice, and other necessities in the neighbouring provinces, or dried for future use. They sometimes go a great way to sea in their canoes. They have rope-makers, who manufacture cordage of all lengths and sizes; some, as much as one hundred and thirty fathoms long: the ropes for

netting are made from the bark of different trees. The women are employed in preparing these for use.

Though the slaves, as we have before observed, are treated with lenity, a strict guard is kept over them to prevent their running away ; and if any one is suspected of such an intention, an Ombiasse is sent for to lay a spell upon them. This impostor mixes up a dose consisting of scraped roots and other ingredients, during which he keeps muttering his cabalistic expressions. This mixture is put into a calabash, and the slave is then hung round with roots, one on his breast, one over each eye, his back, and each leg and arm, giving them a name of some demon : a little is then scraped from every root, which the culprit is ordered to swallow, while the magician pronounces his imprecations over him :—

“ Whenever he thinks of running away, remember, O you such an one (here he names the different demons to whom he has dedicated the roots), how he has eaten what belongs to you ; and, if he offers to go away, arise in his stomach, O you, &c. &c.; make him so sick that he shall not be able to stir : and ye who have guarded his several parts, break his back ; let his breast be tormented with pain, and his legs chained as with parapingoos ; and if he sets forward, join all your powers and break his legs the first time he jumps over any thing in the way.” During the time he pronounces these curses, he tosses his hands about, and raises and depresses his voice alternately, like a fanatic.

When he has tired himself and his audience, he takes off the charmed roots, and making the slave lick every piece, says—"Now let him go where he pleases; the demons who attend me will soon inform me." Such is the influence these wretches have over the natives, that this mummerly seldom, if ever, fails of its effect in keeping the slave from running away. It is no uncommon circumstance, notwithstanding the foregoing account, for them to marry their daughters to their slaves, which is the strongest proof that can be given of the liberal sentiments they entertain respecting them. They evidently look upon them merely as *prisoners of war*; and though they make them bear the burthen and heat of the day in the field exercises, they by no means consider them degraded by it.\*

Although they have no circulating medium, many of the Madagascar chiefs are very rich, and their stores contain iron and steel, in bars, hatchets, knives, bills, spades, shovels, wearing apparel, plantations of yams, cattle, and slaves: the latter has been a great article of trade with them, but we trust that recent circumstances will have the effect of preventing it in future. The Zafe Ramini possess great quantities of

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\* We are here speaking only of those slaves who have been captured in war. The *Ondeves*, who, as we have stated, are slaves by extraction, are looked upon as inferior; but the treatment of these is not generally harsh, and their masters are obligated to supply them with the necessaries of life, even in times of scarcity.

gold, which is carefully preserved from the European observation. They invariably keep a portion of the gold possessed by their forefathers, entertaining for it a great veneration. In the province of Manghabei, the whole of their riches, in this precious article, is deposited in the tombs of their ancestors ; and whatever gold coin they obtain of Europeans, in exchange for their various produce, is instantly melted down, and either converted into ornaments or added to their store.

The occult sciences are not unknown to them ; they observe the motions of the heavens, the courses of the stars, and divide the Zodiac into twelve signs. The year is also divided into twelve months, and it begins with the new moon in March ; but they have no other division but that which is naturally suggested by the routine of their domestic concerns. Thus the year commences with the planting season ; and the hot season, the reaping season, and so on, succeed in their several orders.

They speak but one language throughout the island, with only a difference similar to that which exists between a native of London, and one of the north of England. We have before observed, that it is chiefly Arabic, but agreeable to Greek in the construction. The learning of the island is principally confined to the Ombiasses, and the Arabic character is the only one in use with them. These were introduced by the Zafe Ramini, and are twenty-four in number, written from the right to the left, but

the pronounciation of some of them differs from that of the Arabic.

The Ombiasses are their learned men, and are divided into two orders, the Ombiasses Omparorats, and the Ombiasses Omptisiquili; the former are writers, teachers of Arabic, physicians, and magicians. They are a very cunning people, and make a great profit by writing small billets, or talismans, which they sell to the people, who believe them to be preservatives from the various evils which afflict human nature: and such is the credulity of the latter, amongst the lower classes, that the evidence of their senses weighs nothing against them. Many of the chiefs, however, are superior to this delusion\*, and comply with these sorcerers, in order to retain their influence with the people. Thus they are consulted on every occasion, as well public as private, and their decisions are always respected.

The Omptisiquili are blacks of the Anacandrian race, and also study the art of divination and geomancy; but they do not practise teaching or medicine.

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\* They always consult these impostors before they go to war. On one of these occasions it was necessary to fell a tree, and according as it fell to the east or west, the fortune of the war would be decided. Unluckily, by some mistake, it fell the *wrong way*; upon which the chief who presided, laughed, and said it was a sad blunder: he, however, charged the few who were permitted to attend the ceremony, to say that it *fell right*, and accordingly the battle was successful.

The Madegasses are not ignorant of numbers ; they reckon from one to ten, then begin again, and when they get to ten, add it to the first, and so on : in this manner they will readily cast up a great number. The negroes of Machicore, and the inhabitants of the mountains, having very little to do with commerce, know nothing of numbers.

## CHAP. IX.

*Of War—Its Incitements—divided into Three Kinds—  
Provincial Wars—General Wars—Numbers engaged  
— Weapons—Generalissimo chosen—Magicians con-  
sulted—Mode of Attack—Foreign Wars—Method of  
suing for Peace.*

THE business of war unfortunately occupies a great portion of the time, the talents, and the feelings of the Madegasses. We have before alluded to the circumstances which operate to occasion this ; namely, the subdivision of the island into a number of petty provinces, which continually creates a jarring of interests; the remembrance of family feuds, which are religiously kept up, and impose an indispensable obligation on the descendants to revenge them ; and, above all, the accursed slave-trade, which operates in every possible direction. Being a source of profit, it excites their avarice ; and the slightest pretexts are considered sufficient to justify an attack, which indeed frequently takes place without any pretext at all : thus, the causes of retaliation are multiplied *ad infinitum*, till the whole island is thrown into one general ferment, and revenge and hatred are, as it were, the breathing element of a large portion of its inhabitants.

Their warfare may be divided into three kinds—provincial, general, and foreign.

The provincial are those which are excited by private grievances, in which the public interests of the island, or any large portion of it, are not concerned; and they are generally occasioned, either by some new insult, or old private quarrels between individual chiefs.—As the mode of attack is similar to that of the others, we shall presently describe it.

Their general wars are those in which the public interests of the island are involved, or in which the original parties possess sufficient influence to engage the neighbouring chiefs in the struggle. The first step is to sound the disposition or intentions of the adjacent states; and this is done by means of emissaries, who make a regular canvass; taking down the numbers each ally engages to furnish, by means of knots on a thong of leather or cord: when once a chief has made an engagement for a certain number of men, and that number is registered on the cord, it is considered an obligation of the most indissoluble kind; nor has it ever occurred, that a party has failed of his engagement, after this public recognition has taken place.

In some of these wars, the numbers engaged are very great—from thirty thousand to one hundred thousand and upwards. Benyowsky calculates that he had at command one hundred and twenty-three thousand native warriors; and on one occasion there appeared before him upwards of forty thousand collected together in time of peace.

Their warlike weapons differ in the different pro-



vinces. In some they use a great dart or spear; carrying also fifteen or twenty Assagayes, which are frequently dipped in poison: the large one is called Renefelo, or *Mother-dart*. From Manghasia to Manghabei, they use a shield and a large spear; and to the north of that province they always engage in close fight, with a large shield and a short spear. Since the introduction of fire-arms and gunpowder on the island, these weapons are less used than formerly, except in the interior, and among the mountains. The use of cannon has not yet been adopted in their *attacks*; nor is it practicable, on account of the badness of the roads, and the hilly nature of the country. But the donacs of many of the chiefs are *defended* with them. The people of Manamboule are reckoned the stoutest and most resolute soldiers; many of them marching with six large spears stuck in their shields.

As soon as the several quotas are determined on, a council of war is held by the allied chiefs, at which a generalissimo is chosen, who is usually the most powerful amongst them. They then appoint the time and place of rendezvous, which is kept a profound secret from all, except those who are present. Spies are sent out to observe the situation, condition, strength, and countenance of the enemy; and also to discover the state of defence of the towns, and the number of the cattle. They then take the precaution of driving their own cattle into some remote spot in a wood, or on the mountains, where also their wives

and children are placed, that in case a reverse should happen, they may not be discovered by the enemy.

The last preparatory step, is to consult the Ombiasse respecting the result of it. Spreading some sand (which he has previously charmed) on a board, very smooth, he writes some cabalistic characters on it. A perfectly upright tree is then found, and a bald-face cow being brought to it, is killed, and some of the blood smeared on the tree by the magician, who then invokes the demons and spirits of their forefathers; informing them that their sons, grandsons, &c. are going to make war upon their old enemy. Two men of equal strength are then ordered to cut down the tree, one to the north, and the other to the south, giving stroke for stroke with each other. If the tree fall to the north, he pronounces an unfavourable issue; in which case, a new incantation is necessary to counteract it, and work evil upon the enemy. An instrument called an Elodge is made, and being plentifully spell-bound by the sorcerer, is carried at the head of the army. The person who bears this is considered, *pro tempore*, invulnerable: he walks about two hundred yards before the army, and must brave all dangers: *he* must first ford the rivers, even if the crocodiles lie with open mouths to devour him; and *he* must first pass through the woods, at the hazard, every minute, of receiving an assagaye, or a musket shot from the lurking foe; and immediately previous to the engagement, he must advance in face of the enemy's army, and hurl it at them.

These preparations being over, they make a rapid march to the place of rendezvous, and having rested a night, make a sudden attack upon the enemy early the next morning. If they storm a town, they advance towards it with the most dreadful shouts or yells, skipping and leaping with horrid contortions of face and body, and using the most abusive language to the enemy. No rank or order of battle is observed, except that different parties are appointed to attack the town at different places; in other respects they engage in a tumultuous manner, by hundreds, every one exerting himself individually, and closing with the enemy. If the principal object is the capture of slaves, they spare all who do not resist; but if some deadly quarrel is the occasion of the war, they seldom give quarter to the men, and therefore the party who are worsted have no other resource than to run. The women and children are made captives, and, if the former please the captors, they take them for wives. The children of the chiefs, however, are usually destroyed, lest they should happen, one time or other, to take it into their heads to revenge the injury, and make reprisals. If the assailants are successful, they burn the towns, and parties are sent to attack the neighbouring villages, which they likewise reduce to ashes. The cattle they meet with are driven away, or if they fear the enemy will obtain reinforcements, and attack them in turn, they are slaughtered, and left on the spot. The plantations of rice, and other grain and yams, are likewise

laid waste, and the whole country exhibits the most desolate and distressing appearance. They seldom meet with much cattle, as it mostly happens that the enemy has some notice of the intended attack, and take the precaution of conveying them, with their wives and children, to a place of concealment and safety.

Sometimes they make a sudden attack on a town by night, and surprise the enemy when least expected. In these cases, each man takes a piece of flesh in his hand, and getting into the place in the dead of night, throws the meat to the dogs to prevent their barking. As soon as the whole party are within the enclosure, a musket is fired; but in other respects the most profound silence is observed: this alarms the inhabitants, who, rising instantly, are stabbed or taken prisoners as they come out of their dwellings: the women and children are spared as usual, the cattle driven off, and the victorious party return home in as private a manner as possible.

Their foreign wars consist of descents upon the neighbouring islands, or on the coast of Mosambique and Delagoa. These are generally undertaken when they are at peace amongst themselves, and in such cases they raise a formidable army. The Comoro islands have, it appears, been the theatre of these operations for nearly forty years past, as we have before hinted; and on these occasions, the most systematic arrangement is observed. A number of the leading chiefs take the command, and the usual

mode of canvassing the provinces is resorted to, some port in the north-west part of the island being appointed as a place of rendezvous. The time generally chosen for the expedition, is the month of September, taking advantage of the wind; and the number engaged amounts to many thousands, who set sail in canoes holding about thirty men each: we have seen a recent account, which states, that they could, if necessary, furnish a thousand of these canoes. The first island they make, is Mayotta, whence they are descried at a distance, a continual watch being kept at that time of the year. They pass this island, and sail for Johanna, the inhabitants of which place are usually apprized of their approach by a large fire on some hill in the former. The best preparations that the time will admit, are made; the inhabitants retire to the towns, which are fortified and shut up, and a supply of provisions laid in to sustain a regular siege. As soon as the Madegasses arrive, part of them form a regular investment, while others are despatched to bring in provisions and plunder, and to seize all the inhabitants who have not been fortunate enough to reach the towns. Sometimes the besieged suffer a want of provisions, and numbers of them die of hunger and thirst. The siege continues till the assailants have exhausted their supplies, when they return as they came, with their prisoners and plunder: the former are usually sold for slaves; but those Madegasses who are taken are invariably put to death. We are happy to be

able to state, that through the intervention of the Governor of the Mauritius, these predatory expeditions are likely to be put a stop to, he having prevailed upon the Madegasse chiefs to dissolve an armament raised for such an undertaking, five years since; and a proclamation was also issued by Radama, the king of Madagascar, forbidding any such excursions in future.

When the combatants on one side are tired of war, or find themselves too weak to make a successful opposition, they sue for peace. Their method in such a case is, to send ambassadors with presents, and the necessary preliminaries for an accommodation. If the enemy are disposed to listen favourably to the overtures, *they* likewise return presents by *their* envoys, and a day is agreed on for a conference upon the business. These envoys are seldom idle when at the camp or court of their opponents, for they take particular notice of every circumstance relative to the situation and condition of the enemy. On the day appointed, the chiefs repair with their whole armies to the spot fixed on, which is usually the bank of a river. Each party kills a bull, and presents the other with a portion of the liver, which is eaten in presence of the envoys, with earnest protestations and solemn oaths, attended with imprecations that the liver they have eaten may prove poison or burst them; that God would forsake them, and withdraw his hand from amongst them, that they may be destroyed by their enemies, and their race be extinct with them-

selves, if they ever break the peace, or carry off each other's cattle, or kill each other's subjects, or have any design of sending witchcraft or poison into the enemy's country. If a chief sue for peace from inability to support himself, he must humble himself before his opponent; and having procured from another chief a protection for the security of his person, must *personally* acknowledge himself a vassal. In this case, the conqueror presents him with the liver, and he, by eating it, engages to be faithful to him. Wars are concluded, and peace restored in this manner; but, as it is with some other countries, the peace lasts just as long as expedience or policy renders it desirable; and notwithstanding the solemnity with which it is conducted, they do not feel themselves altogether secure, but remain on their guard as before.

The contents of this chapter will, we doubt not, excite emotions of pain and disgust in the minds of our readers; and it is not our desire to repress those feelings, or to extenuate in any degree the practice of the Madegasses, in their barbarous system of war: we would rather strengthen and extend them, by placing the horrors of war, *in all cases*, in their true colours, and by cautioning the reader against being deceived by names and specious circumstances. For our own part, we cannot discriminate, in point of *moral guilt*, between a war in Europe and a war in Madagascar—between a scientific bombardment of

the capital of a *friendly power*, and a predatory attack upon a neighbouring island. It matters not to us, (while the same principle operates in both cases) and if the human race is to be destroyed, whether it be effected in a wholesale way by the sweeping cannon, or individually by the insidious Assagaye—by well-disciplined armies opposed rank to rank, and *coolly* determined to make all the waste they can of the blood of their fellow-creatures—or by an indiscriminate multitude fighting without order or discipline, and murdering all who come within reach: war is war, and the pretexts that are urged in favour of it, will have no weight with us, while the principles in which it originates, are in opposition to those that ought to constitute the basis of national justice; and in passing our finger over the map of the world, we shall continue to inscribe *Aceldama* on every field without discrimination, that is polluted with the blood of the slain. We long for the period when the nations “shall learn war no more”—when the inhabitants of the world “shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;” and every step that indicates an approach to such a result, will be hailed by us with more delight, than the largest extension of national glory, acquired at the expense of thousands of lives.



## CHAP. X.

*Civil Arts—Iron Foundry—Goldsmiths—Carpenters—Potteries—Weaving—Making of Wines—Indigo—Paper—Ink—Pens—Trade carried on by Barter—Weights and Measures—Articles of Commerce—Resources—Foreign Trade—Future Prospects—Reflections on the Failure of the French to Establish Colonies in Madagascar.*

THE civil arts have not yet made any great progress in Madagascar; notwithstanding which, they have some artificers who are very expert, especially those who work in iron and steel, which are obtained from their own mines, and are very excellent in quality: their method of working the ore is as follows;—they first reduce it to powder by burning it upon coals when brought from the mine; they then place it between four large stones, clayed round for the purpose, and, by continual blowing underneath with bellows, made in shape of a gun-barrel, and worked like a common pump, the ore runs in less than an hour; the metal is afterwards extracted, and, by means of great heat, formed into bars of four or five pounds weight: these are afterwards wrought into the various implements used by the natives, such as hatchets, hammers, shovels, knives, razors, nippers, gridirons, forks, javelins, darts, &c.

The goldsmiths are natives of Vohemaro; they manufacture ear-rings, bracelets, necklaces, and other gold ornaments, the material of which is extracted from their own mines. They are not acquainted with the use of borax, but solder the gold by dipping it in a mixture, made by pounding a plant of the papilionaceous kind (called voame), which they mix with lemon juice. This answers the same purpose as borax.

Their carpenters are far from being despicable workmen, considering how few tools they possess, which are the plane, hatchet, wedge, rule, and a few others: it does not appear that they use the saw; their boards are riven from the tree in the first instance, and afterwards reduced to the proper thickness by the hatchet. Many of the houses would not disgrace some of our best builders in the construction and design, though the workmanship is rough.

The potters are very curious in their wares; they manufacture great and small plates, pots, and jugs, of a singular description: these they glaze with a kind of black earth, which sets a high polish on them.

The process of weaving is tedious and difficult, being performed entirely by hand: each thread is carefully drawn along the wool, which is fixed to a wooden frame; and the neatness of the workmanship is very surprising.—Some of their shawls are beautiful in texture.

Mats, baskets, and other wares of the kind are made exceedingly neat, particularly the latter, of which they

exchange a great number with the ships that touch at the island.

They make indigo from a tree called Banghets, by the following process : As soon as the tree is in blossom, they collect great quantities of it, which they steep in water, together with the stalks and leaves ; which, being well stirred, are decomposed in two or three days. The water, by this infusion, becomes of a violet colour : the stalks and leaves are then cleared from the decoction, which, being mixed and well incorporated with a proportionable quantity of olive oil, is let off from the bottom through a sieve, into a large tub underneath, and the indigo precipitates like dregs, in the course of two or three days. The water is then drawn off, by means of pipes, (or by dipping rags and wringing them out) till nothing but the sediment remains, which, being dried in the shade, is the true indigo.

They make three sorts of wine. The first is from honey, much in the same way as mead. It is called toak, and is the most common. The second is made of the sugar-cane, and is called toupare, which signifies sugar-wine. It has a bitterish taste, something like strong beer that is well hopped, or apricot kernels. A great deal of this kind is made in the provinces of Manamboule, Matatane, and Manghabei. The following is the process :—The sugar-canes are boiled in water to two-thirds : it is then put into large calabashes, and in three days the wine becomes so strong and corrosive, that it will eat through an egg-shell in a

night's time. The third is made of the banana fruit, boiled four or five hours. This is a pleasant beverage in hot weather, and is not much unlike cider.

Paper is manufactured in the province of Amboule, from the bark of the real papyrus of Egypt, called by the natives, Sanga-Sanga. Its process is simpler, and the instruments used are fewer, than in the European manufacture. They first separate the inner rind in a skilful manner, and divide it into very thin pieces, which they sprinkle with water, and then lay in various crossings, pressing them down very hard. It is next boiled in a strong lye, made of wood ashes, for a considerable time, till it becomes completely soft and supple, when it is reduced to a paste, in a wooden mortar, and then again washed till perfectly cleansed. Afterwards it is poured upon mats made of exquisitely fine reeds or rushes, twisted and joined together very close, on which it dries and becomes paper, and is then laid on the leaf of the rates, and being sized over with a decoction of rice, to prevent the sinking, is again dried, and then fit for use. This paper is a little yellowish, but if well sized will not blot.

They make ink of a decoction of the Arandrante wood. The sap is drawn from the tree, reduced to a proper consistence, and a little verdigris put in. It is not quite so black as the European ink, but is more glossy.

Their writing-pens are made of pieces of bamboo, the size of a quill, and are rendered transparent

and hard in the same manner ; namely, by boiling and baking.

The trade of Madagascar is transacted by barter ; and having no circulating medium, they are but imperfectly qualified to carry it on to any great extent beyond the province they reside in. If a person is in want of any article—cotton for instance, he carries rice, or cattle, or iron, into the cotton country, and exchanges them for what he wants. The usual medium of exchange, where no specific article is wanted on the one side, is spades, hoes, shovels, and knives, as being the most handy and convenient articles they possess. Sometimes they exchange gold and silver when they have it, but *not as coin*, for they are but little acquainted with the nature of money. They make little use of the immense resources their island contains ; even the manufacture of silk is but slightly attended to, though they wear silk garments chiefly brought from the Indies.

In weighing, they make use of the same weights as high as a drachm, which is denominated sompi. They use these in weighing gold and silver, but other goods are bartered by weight.

Their measures for rice are the troubahovache, or king's measure ; the zatvee, which implies one hundred, and it contains an hundred voules, or fifty pounds of uncleansed rice ; the monca, a measure of six pounds of cleansed rice ; the voule, a measure of half a pound. Cloths, stuffs, and cordage, are measured by a *refe*, or measure, six feet long. In esti-

inating their horracas, or rice marshes, they do not value them according to the number of acres or roods they contain, but according to the quantity of rice that it requires to seed them.

The principal articles of foreign commerce which the island possesses, are iron, steel, timber, rice, sugar, honey, indigo, dyeing woods, cotton, silk, oils, gums, resins, mats. The produce of these is capable of being extended almost to *any* degree, with a moderate share of exertion; and, were a trade opened with the natives, and a sufficient stimulus set before them, they would soon establish such a market as would abundantly supply the demands of their neighbours.

In the year 1776, when Benyowsky was governor, the amount of the subsidies paid to him by the chiefs, was nine hundred and forty thousand livres, notwithstanding he was almost continually at war with one or other of them, (generally the Seclaves). He had laid a foundation for an extensive cultivation of the land, which there is no doubt would have been effected, had he remained to carry his plans into execution. The quality of their produce is of the first rate. The timber is fit for ship or house building, as well as for ornamental work. The dyeing woods and drugs possess a brilliancy of colour far superior to those which Europe produces; and they extract an acid from the sap of a tree, called the Fig-tree of Adam, (a species of banana), which fixes the colours unalterably. Of silks they have four species, two of which are equal to any brought from the east: and

the Madagascar cotton is none inferior to the Bourbon. Indeed, what is usually called by that name, is principally sent from the former place, and shipped from thence to Europe.

Hitherto the Madegasses have been but imperfectly acquainted with the vast extent and value of the resources of their country. Under any other circumstances than those which have existed, they would long ago have attracted the attention of the commercial nations of Europe. With a superior geographical situation, a climate congenial to the growth of all the vegetables, plants, and trees common to both hemispheres, and every country; mountains replete with various metals and minerals; navigable rivers running in every direction; and excellent gulfs, bays, and harbours distributed around the coast, at short distances from each other, she can boast unparalleled advantages; and were she in the hands of a civilized people, she could command a trade with the four quarters of the globe.

At present the commerce of Madagascar, like its agriculture and the arts, is in its infancy; (and, indeed, we may look upon these as of collateral growth; for it is seldom that we see them flourish separately.) It is transacted wholly on the island, and is confined chiefly to the Arabians, the Isles of France and Mauritius, and our East-India ships, which usually touch at it to take in a supply of water and provisions.

But it appears a new era is about to dawn upon her, and that the reigning monarch has not only

*thoughts* of promoting the civilization and happiness of his subjects, but has in good earnest, and in the most determined manner, *set about it*. With a profound, and, we believe, a sincere respect for the British nation, he has, in a late transaction with them, made it a *sine-qua-non*, that while he agrees to do his utmost to comply with their request of abolishing the slave-trade throughout the island, they, on their part, shall undertake to instruct a number of his subjects in the civil arts; and at the same time he invites artificers of every description, to come and settle in his dominions, with the most positive assurances of his protection and support. We may therefore expect to hear more of this long-forgotten place before many years are elapsed; for unless we have entirely mistaken the genius and disposition of her people, civilization will make a rapid progress amongst them: we are not speaking of a nation who are not alive to the advantages of such a state, or who are indifferent about them; but of one possessing a mind capacious enough to view them in their fullest extent;—which feels, and is impatient of the want of them,—and which has the power and the resolution to supply that want. After having seen and heard what is going forward amongst the civilized nations of Europe, the Madegasses *cannot*, like the people in the frozen regions of the north, sit down in their smoky huts, contented with the superstition and ignorance entailed upon them by their forefathers: nor *will* they, with the enervated inhabitants of the East, and the abori-



gines of the West, meekly bow down their necks for the oppressor to tread on. We see in *her* a “lion apprized of the pursuit,”—past experience having taught her that her welfare, though promoted, encouraged, and strengthened by an intercourse with foreign nations, must find its basis within her own shores,—must emanate from, and be supported by, her own exertions.

We do not profess to understand much of the complicated machinery by which the commercial interests of a country are directed; nor are we sufficient politicians to dive into the affairs of cabinets, so as to be able to comprehend why an object that is (to all rational appearance) of trivial importance, and doubtful issue, is pursued with unabated ardour;—or, perhaps, inflexible obstinacy, even long after success is hopeless;—while another, which presents unbounded advantages, and which lies within, and is even offered to, the grasp, is either feebly held, or altogether rejected.

In our view of the subject before us, we have attended to facts rather than abstract reasoning—to practice rather than speculation; and, under their influence, we confess we have been surprised at the manner in which the French Government have not merely slighted, but abused and insulted the magnificent country of which we are treating. It could not arise from a want of knowing the riches she possessed, because these are clearly pointed out by their earliest writers on the subject; nor could they be mistaken

as to the strength and disposition of her inhabitants ; for the experience of the first few years of their intercourse with them, must have conveyed a tolerably clear intimation of these. The only inference we can draw from the facts which have presented themselves to our observation, is, that the French Government were possessed of every qualification necessary to insure a failure in their endeavours to colonize Madagascar : to a spirit of intrigue and jealousy, which fettered the hands, and cramped the energies of their colonists, they united a parsimony that starved them, and a domineering and revengeful spirit, that disgusted and incensed their new subjects—not sufficiently despotic and arbitrary to enforce their wishes with promptness and decision\*, but too much so to allow them to treat with the Madegasses on enlightened and liberal principles. It is to these causes we attribute the failures which we shall soon have occasion to relate. Had France, in the first instance, established a colony upon the principles of mutual advantage, and supported it in a manner worthy of a great nation ;—had she, instead of sending soldiers to ravage the plains, and massacre the inhabitants, in order to reduce them to obedience, conveyed thither artizans and mechanics, to communicate to them the blessings of civilization,—instead of an inveterate enemy, she would have had a faithful and enlightened ally ; and their combined exertions

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\* The reader will recollect, that we are speaking of the times *previous* to the French Revolution, and not of those which comprised the reign of Napoleon.

might have bidden defiance to any European power, to wrest from her her Indian possessions. But, although "knowledge is power," experience convinces us, that power is not always knowledge; though wisdom will ever impart greatness to character, our great men do not always stand pre-eminent for their wisdom. We trust, however, that good will arise out of this evil; for though the French have suffered the severe effects of the folly and criminality of their rulers, the Madegasses, perhaps, will in future have abundant cause to rejoice at that impolicy, which has thus left them unfettered by any relative obligations, whether of a political, civil, or *religious* nature.

## CHAP. XI.

*Ancient Form of Government—Ampansacabe, or Sovereign—His Privileges—Present Constitution—Kings—Chiefs—Filoubeis—Republics—Voadziri—General Code of Laws.*

THE form of government has already been hinted at. The division of the island into a number of petty provinces, necessarily involves an aristocracy. Tradition relates, that the island was formerly divided into four kingdoms, and afterwards into six : but upon the arrival of the race of Ramini, their leader was chosen Ampansacabe, or Sovereign of the whole island, which form of government was continued without intermission through twenty-four generations, ending with Ramini Larizon, who, as we have before mentioned, was slain by the natives in an insurrection, in which they were assisted by the French. Since that period the title has been extinct.

The privileges attached to the office of Ampansacabe were considerable. He had the right of nominating the Rhoandrians to assist at his cabar or council, at which all those whom he cited were bound to appear ; and upon any question arising of a doubtful nature, the judgment of the Ampansacabe was decisive.

Another privilege or prerogative was, that each Rhoandrian was obliged to leave him by will, a portion of his property, which however the successors usually redeemed with a slight tribute or fine.

A third prerogative gave him a right to exact from each Rhoandrian, one tenth of the produce of his land, and a number of horned cattle and slaves, in proportion to the riches of his district.

The present constitution consists of four kings as formerly, called, according to their respective quarters, kings of the North, South, East, and West; these kings have each of them absolute power over their subjects, and as it respects public matters, the Rhoandrians and chiefs are subject to their controul; a tribute is paid to them, as formerly to the Ampan-sacabe. They are the generalissimos in times of war, and all negociations and transactions of a public nature are under their direction. Under these four, each province has its prince or chief, called Dian, who is completely independent in his own dominions. He has the power of life and death over his subjects, though this power is not frequently exercised in a wanton manner. To him belong all the lands of the province over which he presides, and they are appropriated by a grant from him to the individual who wishes to occupy any particular spot, and who pays him a small fine. He has the privilege of nominating a governor over each village in his dominions, for the purpose of administering justice: these are called Filoubeis. The chiefs are most of them

Rhoandrians, and are greatly respected and even venerated by the people, who approach them with great reverence, and kneel down before them. Their title is hereditary, and they cannot be dispossessed of it by any means whatever—it ceases only with their lives.

In the province of Ghalemboule, each town is a distinct republic, governed by its own laws, and possessing the power of administering justice. Their filoubei is chosen from amongst themselves, and is no more than a president. They generally choose the most ancient men amongst them for this office, and his province is to see to the administration of justice, and deciding of all differences amongst the rest. These filoubeis mutually assist each other in times of war, against those of another race; and if they ever quarrel with each other, and a war threatens to take place, those not implicated interfere as mediators, and use every means to effect an accommodation. If this be refused, the mediators separate, leaving them at full liberty to act as they please.

In Manatengha, Izame, and the Vale of Amboule, they are governed by a Voadziri, who is called Rabertau, or Great Lord; these are generally very rich in cattle and other provisions, and rank amongst the most considerable men on the island. They exercise sovereign authority and absolute power; but in times of scarcity, their subjects, knowing that they possess granaries replete with provisions, frequently assemble in great numbers, and seize their

persons by surprise, threatening them with death if they do not grant them relief. In order to extricate themselves from this dangerous dilemma, they generally issue immediate orders for distributing provisions amongst them. These, however, they do not fail to claim again, with large interest, in the event of a plentiful harvest.

Each of the kings possesses absolute power in the territory which he governs. His counsellors are chosen by himself, and are selected from the chiefs. He consults them upon every occasion of importance, but, after all, his own will must decide, as from it there is no appeal. His proclamations are promulgated by means of messengers, in the several districts, being first delivered to the chiefs, who communicate them to the people.

The military force of the country is very great. We do not know whether any estimate of it has ever been made ; but if we admit Benyowsky's calculation, which gives the number of males at two and a half millions, the number of fighting-men cannot fall far short of half a million, and probably exceeds it, as every one capable of bearing arms is a warrior. They are called together by means of emissaries, and have no other pay than the booty they can obtain ; and even a part of this goes to the king or chiefs. When the expedition is over, they disband, and return without any ceremony of dismissal.

At the death of a chief, his subjects are not obliged to submit themselves to his successor, but may go and

reside in any part of the island. Indeed, no obligations exist to confine the inhabitants to any particular province, or to exact exclusive fealty to the chief of a single district: every man, as an inhabitant of the island, has a right to take up his abode, or remove, when and where he pleases, provided he submits to the general laws of the island.

Although they have no written code of laws, they have a regular system for the administration of justice, which is founded upon the principles of nature. These are universally known and understood, and the penalties are enforced with promptness and rigour. They are called Massindili, or *Law of the Prince*—Massinpoh, or *Law of Private Persons*—and Massintani, or *Law of the Country*.

The law of the prince is the prince's will, as founded upon reason, and consists in administering justice to every individual, adjusting of differences, and of punishing delinquents in their persons or property. The particular precepts are as follow :—

1. If one man assault another, *maliciously*, and break a leg or arm, he is fined *fifteen* head of cattle, which accrue to the injured party.

2. If one man break the head of another, and the wounded party have not returned blow for blow, the fine is three oxen.

3. If two men quarrel, and one curse the father or mother of the other, (whether they be dead or alive,) and his antagonist retort not the curse against



his father or mother, the offender is fined two oxen.

4. If a man be detected in robbing his neighbour of an ox or cow, he is obliged to restore ten for it.

5. If one be found stealing Guinea corn, carrawances, yams, &c. out of the plantations, he forfeits a cow and calf to the owner, or more, in proportion to the offence.

6. If the theft be a hive of honey, the fine is three iron shovels.

7. If one man's cattle break into another man's plantation, he must give an iron shovel for every beast found there.

8. If a man borrow an ox or cow of his neighbour, and the debt remain a year, he pays him six calves in return for it. If it remain two years, those calves are supposed to be three steers and three heifers, which the lender can demand; and so, for every year the debt continues uncanceled, the growth and produce of the *first year's demand* is the interest awarded to him: thus, at the expiration of ten years, they calculate what the three bull-calves and three cow-calves would have produced in that time, all which belong to the creditor.

9. If a man be found guilty of adultery with the wife of one who is his superior, he forfeits thirty head of cattle, and a great quantity of beads and shovels. If the parties are of equal rank, the fine is twenty beasts; but if with the wife of a king or chief, the offending parties are put to death.

10. A man may marry the wife of his brother or father after their death, provided, in the latter case, the woman is not his own mother.

11. A man may also marry his father's daughter, if she had not the same mother with himself.

The penalties we have recounted are inflicted in the most summary manner. Indeed, an injured person, who has suffered considerably, if the case be notoriously flagrant, may execute justice himself, without sending the criminal to the filoubei, or waiting his sentence. Sometimes, also, a thief, caught in the act, if he be an old offender, is put to death on the spot, without further ceremony.

Massinpo relates to the behaviour of private persons, in their employments, trades, conversation, support of their families, manner of living, and undertakings. It may, in fact, be called the law of courtesy, as it takes cognizance of offences committed against the rules of good neighbourhood, and regulates the private transactions between man and man. By this law, if a married woman, who is separated from her husband, should have children by another man, the children are the property of the husband, unless she be married again, and with his consent, which is seldom obtained, till the tacq, or dowry, which her first husband paid to her father upon their marriage, is returned.

Massintane is the general and particular custom of the country—the solid foundation and standard of their conduct on all occasions ; as their manner of

planting, sowing, building villages, making war, public rejoicing, dancing, exercise of arms, &c. &c. It includes the whole of their domestic economy, which is thereby reduced to a system. In this law we find the true cause why the customs of their forefathers are kept up, and innovations prevented, their continuance being as firmly provided for, as the punishment of offenders.

Thus have we described the simple bands by which the state of society in this great island is held together; and whatever moral defects may be found in their composition, the effects produced constrain us to think, either that the structure, which is preserved from falling by such a cement, is placed upon a good foundation, or that the simplicity constitutes the strength of the building. We are accustomed in our own country, to see laws heaped upon laws, and penalties upon penalties, to protect our persons and properties; while the effect produced is by no means such as might be expected from such a complicated piece of machinery. Much of this is undoubtedly owing to the height which luxury has attained, the numerous artificial wants thereby created, the manifold and extended nature of property, and the great inequality of circumstances necessarily resulting therefrom. We would not, with the Abbé Rochon, compare the civilized with the savage state, for the sake of drawing an inference in favour of the latter; nor would we, with him, pronounce the native of Madagascar, with his numerous seraglio,

his buccaneering exploits, and his horrid infanticide, as destitute of either vice or virtue. But we would again return to our first position—that if under disadvantages both of a natural and moral kind, such a large mass of mankind can be kept together in a state of society by a code of laws so simple, and apparently so little calculated to produce such an effect; either there must exist a moral stamina far stronger than we have any idea of, or the simplicity of the laws constitutes their strength, and ensures their observance.

We will leave the reader to draw his own conclusions; only remarking, that if Madagascar is to be civilized, and Englishmen are to be the agents and advisers, we trust they will consider well the genius and disposition of the inhabitants: and while they recommend the removal of the moral defects which disfigure the present system, they must be careful not to weaken the obligations which unite them so strongly together, by ingrafting thereon too many of the refinements of civil life.

## CHAP. XII.

*Reflections on the History of barbarous Nations—Portuguese Settlements—Pronis appointed Governor by the East-India Company—Recalled for his Cruelty—Flacourt succeeds him—Recalled—Justifies himself—Perishes with his Associates in returning to Madagascar—Natives massacre the Garrison, and destroy Fort Dauphin.*

THE history of barbarous nations, previous to the period when they became known to those that are civilized, is, for obvious reasons, comprised in a few pages. Destitute of the arts, sciences, and literature, they possess not the means of transmitting to posterity the records of past transactions; and with them, ages roll away, leaving behind no recollection or memorial of their former active existence, beyond a few straggling traditionary accounts of the most remarkable events that have taken place. Even if the finger of history could trace back an unbroken outline of events, it would present but a dull, monotonous, uniform relation of petty wars, bloody massacres, and inglorious victories.

Notwithstanding this, much instruction as well as amusement may be drawn from the perusal of the history (as far as it goes) of such a people. To contemplate the human character in its rudest form,

and observe the fetters which, in such a state, bind down the soul (destined to nobler aims) to the level of the brute creation; and to reflect on the various gradations through which such a being must necessarily pass, before it can arrive at a state of complete civilization, is both a curious and instructive employment; and, if properly pursued, will produce the most beneficial effects upon the mind.

The foregoing remarks will, we conceive, apply with peculiar force to the nation whose history now lies before us. Placed at a remote distance from polished society, and shut up in the bosom of their own island, the transactions of, probably, thousands of years have sunk into the abyss of oblivion, leaving behind them scarce a vestige of their existence, beyond the mouldering tombs of the ancestors of the present generation; and the adherence of the latter to customs and rites that tell us they once belonged to, or originated from, a people with whose collateral history our minds have been familiar from earliest infancy.

The few particulars which have reached us of the history of the island, prior to its discovery by the Portuguese in 1506, have been related in another part of this work. For them we are indebted, not to the Madegasses themselves, but to the Mahometan strangers who conquered the island; and who, being qualified for the task by the knowledge of letters, have left written memorials of them.

Madagascar was too considerable and important a

place to be neglected by the Portuguese after they had once found their way thither; they sailed round it in 1508, and constantly anchored at it afterwards in their voyages to the East Indies. They built a fort in the province of Anossi, on a steep rock, which is situated on the bank of the fine river Franchere. It was near the village of Hatore, and had several large inclosures round it, with buildings on them. These were cultivated by the colony, and supplied them with all sorts of provisions; but the garrison not being sufficiently strong, and the natives being jealous of such an establishment so far in the interior, they were massacred to a man.

In their intercourse with the island, they had prevailed on a chief, named Andian Thionban, to send his son Andian Maroarive, to Goa, in order to be instructed in the Christian religion. There he was put under the care of the Jesuits, was baptized, and so far initiated in catholicism, as to be able to give an account of his faith—and he could also read and write after the European manner. Upon his return to his native country, he assumed the sovereignty, (the office being vacant by death,) and then returned to his former paganism. He reigned some years, and lived on friendly terms with the Portuguese: but was at length killed by the French with a musket shot, when that people attacked the town of Franchere, at which he resided.

Very little of the interior was discovered by the Portuguese, or by the Dutch, who also made a point

of touching at the island in *their* route to the Indies. The chief object they appear to have had in view was, to secure themselves a safe retreat, and a supply of fresh provisions in their voyages; their whole strength being reserved for the acquisition and support of establishments more to the eastward; and it was left to the French to follow the example of the Spaniards in South America, and attempt to establish themselves by subduing the inhabitants.

Their first enterprize was in 1642, when a patent was granted by Cardinal Richelieu, to Captain Rivault, for the exclusive right of sending ships and forces to Madagascar, and the neighbouring islands, in order to establish a colony, plantation, and commerce. Having obtained this patent, Rivault established a society under the name of the French East-India Company, upon which the period, which at first was only two years, was extended to twelve.

The new Company sent their first ship in March 1642, under the command of Captain Coquet, who, it seems, was about to sail thither on his own and some private merchants' account, to bring home a cargo of ebony. With him they sent two governors, Pronis and Fouquenbergh, and twelve other Frenchmen, who had orders to remain there, and wait the arrival of a ship which was to sail from France in November following. In their passage, they anchored at the islands of Mascarenha, or Isle of Bourbon, and Diego des Rois, and took possession of them in the king's name. They next made St. Mary's island,



and the Bay of Antongil, of which they also took possession, and ultimately arrived at the port of St. Lucia, or Manghasia, in September, where they immediately established themselves. This place is situated in  $24^{\circ}. 30'$  latitude, at the northern extremity of the province of Anossi; and Pronis chose the village of Manghasia for his residence, which stands on the banks of a navigable river that rises on Mount Siliva. The neighbourhood round is very fertile; the plains abound with cattle, and the woods with excellent timber for the dock-yard; and the harbour is defended from heavy gales, by the Island of St. Lucia.

The settlement was reinforced in April following, (1643) by the arrival of Captain Resimont, in the ship St. Lawrence, with seventy men. His arrival happened very opportunely; for Coquet, having gone to Matatane to take in his cargo, the natives, instigated by the Portuguese, had meditated an attack upon the settlement; and it required all the address of Pronis to ward off the danger, which he only effected by means of large presents to Dian Ramach, the chief of the district.

Having thus stifled the treachery of the natives, and received a supply of men, Pronis sent twelve men to establish themselves in the province of Matatane. Upon their arrival, they advanced about eighteen leagues into that province, towards Manzari, to purchase rice and other provisions, and to explore the country; but six of them were killed in crossing

a river, by the chiefs, who had assembled with their subjects in great numbers, under the command of Zaze Rahimina, a near relative of Dian Ramach, and the other chiefs of Anossi. Resimont's son, and six sailors who were employed in collecting a cargo of ebony, in the province of Vohitzbang, were also destroyed. This opposition was effected by the intrigues of Dian Ramach and the chiefs his neighbours, who, not daring openly to attack the French, secretly instigated those of Matatane. With this opposition, Resimont made up his cargo as quickly as possible, and sent six more men to Pronis, into Anossi, where the latter had remained during the absence of the ships.

They were, however, soon after attacked by an enemy, whom they could neither bribe nor conquer. Owing to the unhealthiness of the air and situation, Pronis, and nearly all his men, were taken ill with the fever, and in the space of one month, a third part of the garrison died : upon which the remainder, with their leader, retired precipitately to the peninsula of Tholangare, where the air is more healthy. This place is about ten leagues south of St. Lucia. Here they built a fort, which they called Dauphin, and which stands in a commanding situation, on the south side of the entrance of the Bay of Tholangare. This spot was well calculated for the establishment of a colony.

The fort is built one hundred and fifty feet above the level of the sea, and commands the road ; so that

no enemy's ship could escape the fire of the batteries ; and the landing to it is rendered difficult, by a steep declivity. It is of an oblong form, and encompassed with good walls of lime and gravel, well cemented. The anchorage in the roadstead is excellent, and the harbour is screened by the Isle of St. Clair from the heavy sea-gales, so that the entrance is convenient at all times for large ships.

The Bay of Loucar lies at the mouth of the river Itapere, on the north side of Tholangare. On the south is the great river Franchere, which is navigable for many miles ; and at a short distance from its mouth is the Lake of Amboule, which is fifteen miles in circumference, and forty feet deep. We have described this place particularly, because it formed the principal settlement of the French, during their attempts to colonize the island ; consequently, its name will frequently occur in this work.

With these local advantages, and, in addition, a neighbourhood that produced in abundance every necessary of life, the peninsula of Tholangare presented a spot more favourable to the views of the settlers, than the Vale of Amboule, which adjoins Anossi to the north. Here, therefore, they erected a town, and enclosed a quantity of land, for the cultivation of fruit and vegetables.

But Pronis does not appear to have been a man calculated to maintain the respectability of such an establishment in the eyes of the natives. He was weak in mind, and indolent in his habits. By these

failings he lost his authority over his troops, who became, in consequence, licentious and refractory. A rebellion was excited against him ; and the settlers, seeing no prospect of his governing the colony with prudence, and fearing the combinations of the native chiefs, arrested and laid him in irons. He remained a captive six months, when he was released by a French ship ; but he had scarcely resumed the command, when he committed an act, which rendered him in the highest degree hateful to the natives—that of selling a number of the natives, who were in the service of the colony, to the governor of the Mauritius ; and amongst these were sixteen women of the Lohavobitz race, which doubly incensed them. These poor creatures were shipped off in so crowded a state, that the greater part of them died on the passage ; and the remaining few, upon arriving at the Mauritius, fled immediately into the woods, whence they could never after be taken, but subsisted in a wild state.

As soon as the East-India Company became acquainted with these transactions, Pronis was suspended, and Flacourt appointed to succeed him. This person arrived at Fort Dauphin the latter end of September, 1648, where he was received in a friendly manner by the chiefs ; but his conduct, like that of his predecessors, was not well adapted to promote a conciliatory spirit. He appears rather to have aimed at reducing the whole island to a state of subjection ; for soon after he arrived, upon some slight provocation, he sent a detachment of eighty

men, attended by a large number of armed blacks, to lay waste, by fire and sword, the beautiful district of Franchere. Nothing was spared; the houses and huts of the poorer class, as well as those of the Rhoandrians, with the chief part of their property, was destroyed, and great numbers of their cows and oxen carried away. He sent several parties into the interior, to explore the country, and obtain a knowledge of the customs and manners of the inhabitants. It is principally to him we are indebted for the accounts we are enabled to give of the natives, and of the country; his history being published upon his return to France, which took place in 1655. He went thither in order to ascertain the cause why the East-India Company had not sent him the promised supplies. Pronis, who still remained on the island, where he had married a native woman, was left in command during Flacourt's absence. The latter, when he arrived in France, found that the East-India Company's charter was about to expire, and that the Marshal Meilleraye was desirous of uniting himself to them in a continuation of the enterprise, at Madagascar. Whether upon the renewal of the charter, this union actually took place, does not appear in Flacourt's work; he was, however, again appointed governor; and, about the year 1659, set sail with a suitable cargo to resume the command; but before he could reach Madagascar, a violent storm arose, in which his vessel was wrecked, and himself and the whole of his men perished.

Flacourt appears to have been entirely neglected by the Company during his stay on the island. In the seven years he resided there, he received no supply, either of forces or provisions from France. His great error lay in endeavouring to accomplish by force, that which would probably have been better effected by conciliatory means. But it appears to have been the general practice of that period, to consider every new country, which was not actually appropriated by an European power, as out of "the limits of social relations;" and therefore to destroy or subdue them, in order to acquire possession of their country, was a matter that followed of course\*.

After the departure of Flacourt, the French interest in the island sensibly declined; they had before lost the affection of the natives, but during his stay, the latter were kept in complete submission to his commands.

In 1655, Fort Dauphin was burnt down. The manner in which this was effected was never ascertained; but there is much reason to believe it was done by the natives. However this may have been, the French had not spirit to build it again, before the arrival of supplies from France: this did not take place till about the year 1660, an account of which belongs to the following chapter.

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\* "The natives of a country are *infidels*—a subject of some European power is the first *Christian* who sets foot in that country:—ergo, that country belongs to that Christian's king."—Spanish and Portuguese logic of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

## CHAP. XIII.

*History continued—Chamargou appointed Governor—Account of La Case—His Marriage with Dian Nong, and Accession to the Sovereignty—Conduct of Chamargou—Cause of the War with Dian Manangue—Consequences—Colony saved by La Case—Appointment of Mondevergue—He returns to France—Of La Haye—He abandons the Island—Death of La Case and Chamargou—Bretesche takes the Command—Abandons the Island—Massacre of the French.*

UPON the death of Flacourt, the East-India Company appointed Chamargou to succeed him, who arrived there about 1660, and finding the Fort destroyed, he immediately set about rebuilding it. The next enterprise he engaged in, was to send an officer with a detachment of troops to explore the country to the north of Matatane. This officer, whose real name was Le Vacher, was born at Rochelle, and possessed talents which well qualified him for the undertaking in which he had engaged. He went by the name of La Case, and his memory is still held in great respect by the natives. Upon his arrival at Fort Dauphin, the French name was held in detestation amongst the natives. The sums which had been expended in establishing the colony were thrown away, or rendered useless, by the impolicy

and injustice of the agents. But La Case, by his valour and prudence, soon restored the reputation of his countrymen, and succeeded so well in every undertaking, that he was looked up to with fear and veneration by the natives, who gave him the name of Dian Pouss, after a celebrated chief, who had formerly conquered the whole island, and whose name is still cherished by the natives. Nor was La Case less distinguished for his moderation and good conduct, than for his valour. By these qualities, he gained so completely the ascendancy over the Madegasses, that Chamargou, the French governor, became jealous of him. The glory he had acquired, excited his envy, and notwithstanding the eminent services he had rendered to the colony, he refused either to reward or to promote him. Sensible that it was to himself the French were indebted for the recovery of their footing on the island, La Case was both disappointed and disgusted at this conduct, which he neither expected nor deserved; and he instantly formed the resolution of withdrawing from Fort Dauphin, which he effected, and with five of his companions in arms, went over to Dian Rassitate, sovereign of the province of Amboule, who took advantage of his dissatisfaction, and made overtures to him. Soon after this, Dian Nong, the daughter of that prince, fell deeply in love with La Case, and offered him her hand with the consent of her father. The old chief, who was declining in years, felt himself happy at the thoughts of marrying his daughter



to a man who was so well qualified in every respect to promote the welfare and happiness of his subjects, and transferred to him the whole of the rich and fertile province of Amboule. Setting aside her colour, the Princess was possessed of every qualification that could render her husband happy. To great personal charms she united a sweetness of temper and an enterprising spirit; so that La Case found no difficulty in making up his mind on the business. Upon his marriage, so little disposed was he to take an undue advantage of his elevation, that upon the death of Dian Rassitate, which soon took place, he refused the title and honours annexed to the sovereignty, and his consort was proclaimed sovereign Princess of Amboule, he reserving to himself only the privilege of being considered the first subject of the realm.

Notwithstanding the harsh and undeserved treatment he had received from the governor of Fort Dauphin, La Case appears to have turned his whole attention to the relief of the garrison, who were at this period again reduced to a pitiable situation. Upon his departure, Chamargou had set a price upon his head, and those of the five Frenchmen who accompanied him, which so incensed the chiefs who resided in the neighbourhood of the fort, and who entertained the highest respect for him, that they entered into a combination, and unanimously refused to supply the colony with provisions. As the garrison were totally unprovided for such an event, the effects were instantly

felt. A famine, and its usual accompaniment, a pestilence, were the consequence ; and the colony, in a few days, saw itself reduced to eighty men, with the prospect of being completely annihilated. At this juncture, a French frigate, commanded by Captain Kercadio, made its appearance, and relieved them from the distressing situation in which they were placed.

Kercadio appears to have been a brave and sensible man. The expedition on which he visited Madagascar, was to endeavour to establish another colony on the island, under the direction of the Marshal Meilleraye, at whose sole expense it was fitted out. But upon their arrival at Madagascar, a great number of the men managed to get on shore, and join the garrison at Fort Dauphin, in order to free themselves from the service they were destined for, being many of them pressed men. At that period it was no unusual circumstance in France, upon such an expedition being about to be fitted out, for families to apply to the government, in case there was a dissolute or depraved character belonging to them, for an authority (called *lettres-de-cachet*) to transport him to some one of the new colonies.

Upon learning the cause of the distress in which the garrison at Fort Dauphin was involved, Kercadio, being aware that the relief he could afford them would be but temporary, endeavoured to persuade Chamargou to consult their welfare, and remit the sentence against La Case. He represented to him

that that officer, after his marriage with Dian Nong, could no longer be considered as a subject of France, that event having in reality given him the sovereignty of the principal part of the island, as well as the province of Amboule; and therefore to continue the proscription against him any longer, would soon raise the whole island in opposition to the garrison. Nothing, however, that he could advance, had any effect upon the obstinate prejudices of the governor, and the very existence of the colony was on the point of being sacrificed to his resentment. Despairing of his influence, Kercadio applied to a barrister, who, by a singular accident, happened to be on board his vessel. It seems his brother, who was a dissolute character, had so greatly offended his family, that they applied for a *lettre-de-cachet* to attach him to the expedition to Madagascar. The barrister was to undertake the charge of him to Nantz, and having incautiously been inveigled into a spunging-house, the agent *kidnapped him instead of his brother*, who, by paying a sum of money, was suffered to make his escape.

To this gentleman Kercadio applied, and begged of him to use his authority and talents in making the governor sensible of his folly and baseness. Fortunately the barrister had the honour of being known to Marshal Meilleraye, whose name, at that period, was in high reputation; and who possessed very great influence in France. He therefore represented to Chamargou, that he should consider himself bound in duty to give the Marshal a detailed account of the

distresses of the colony, and probably of the loss of Fort Dauphin also. This menace had the desired effect. Struck with terror at the name of Meilleraye, the governor, who hitherto was proof against reason and argument, and would not suffer even the prospect of death itself to conquer his resentment against La Case, became all at once humble and submissive. In the most abject manner he intreated Kercadio to forgive his obstinacy, and to endeavour to effect a reconciliation between himself and La Case. Accordingly, the Captain and his friend the barrister set out for the province of Amboule, and soon completed the negociation with the magnanimous La Case, who instantly burying in oblivion the injuries he had sustained from Chamargou, solicited permission from his consort, and the combined chiefs, to go to the relief of his countrymen at the fort. He obtained it, and peace and abundance followed him thither.

Chamargou was far from imitating the generous conduct of La Case. Although fear had obliged him to stifle, it had not conquered his resentment. During the stay of La Case and his consort at Fort Dauphin, he could but ill conceal his jealousy and hatred. La Case, by his prudent counsels and liberality, which were dictated as well by a thorough knowledge of the character of the Madegasses, as by his own natural goodness of disposition, and that of his consort, had once more brought the colony at Fort Dauphin into a flourishing and happy state. But their own affairs required their presence in Amboule; nor was Dian

Nong fond of the residence at the fort. The colonists earnestly intreated them to prolong their stay, but in these requests the governor did not deign to unite; and his subsequent conduct appears to have been dictated by a spirit of malice, excited by his envy: for no sooner were La Case and his wife departed, than he sent a detachment of two hundred men to levy considerable imposts in the province of Anossi, and to subject them to laws that they had never heard of before. This occasioned a fresh war, the consequences of which were rendered more fatal and permanent by a fresh circumstance which took place, the particulars of which are as follow:—

Dian Manangue, the sovereign of the province of Mandrarey, a high spirited and powerful chief, and a faithful ally of the French, had given a most cordial and distinguished reception, in his dorac, to Father Stephen, an ecclesiastic of the order of St. Lazar, and a superior of the mission to Madagascar. This representative of infallibility shewed himself but ill qualified for the important concern that was assigned to him. Seeing the good qualities and disposition of the worthy chief, he thought it would be impossible for him to hear his representations of the Catholic faith, without being struck with their propriety, and embracing it. Fully convinced that it was an affair which only wanted introduction, he began, in somewhat of an abrupt manner, by requesting him to repudiate all his wives but one, and then to embrace the Catholic religion. The good chief perceiving what he was aiming

at, and wishing to let him see he entertained a respect for him as a Frenchman, rather than a Catholic priest, gave him to understand at once, that there was not the slightest prospect of success for him. A private hint of the kind was not, however, considered sufficiently respectful. He therefore assembled his wives and family, in order to make a public harangue on the occasion, to convince the priest that nothing he could say would induce him to alter his mode of living, or renounce his ancient customs.

“I pity thy folly,” said he, “in wishing, that at my age, I should sacrifice my happiness and the pleasures which surround me in my donac to thy will. I pity thee too, for being deprived of that which soothes the cares of life. You will permit me to live with one woman ;—but if the possession of one woman be a good, why is the possession of a numerous seraglio an evil, when peace and harmony prevail amongst those who compose it? Dost thou see any symptoms of jealousy, or seeds of hatred amongst us? No ; all my women are good ; they all endeavour to render me happy ; and I am more their slave than their master.

“But if thy maxims be so useful and necessary, why do not thy countrymen at the Fort follow them? They ought to know much better than I, the merit and value of thy words. Believe me, my good friend; I will not deceive thee : it is impossible for me to change my customs : I will never quit them but with my life. I, however, give thee leave to exercise thy

zeal on the people, who are subject to my authority ; and I give thee the same authority over my family and my children. But this permission will be of very little avail, unless thou canst suit thy precepts to our manners and usages !”

There was but little of state policy in this speech ! Dian Manangue must be simple, indeed, to suppose, that by calling a holy father of the church of Rome to account for his folly, he could induce him to desist from his purpose.

A slight acquaintance with human nature would have induced Father Stephen, at least to alter his mode of attack, and to endeavour, by more gentle means, to remove his prejudices. But it is not the character or the custom of the church of Rome, or her emissaries, to bend to circumstances. The only answer he deigned to make to this artless declaration, was, an absolute and peremptory command, that Dian Manangue should instantly divorce all his wives but one ; threatening, at the same time, that if he refused, a party of the French should be despatched to his donac to carry them off by force.

Such was the surprise and indignation excited by this unexpected and arrogant denunciation, that a general attack was commenced by the women upon the father : they loaded him with blows and imprecations, and would infallibly have stifled him in their rage, had not Dian Manangue hastened to his assistance. Suppressing his own perturbation, he exerted his whole authority to obtain a private interview with the

monk for a few moments; during which, he requested the space of fifteen days, to consider of his proposition respecting his conversion. He then dismissed him with rich presents, and assurances of respect.

His intention, however, in gaining this delay, was, that he might have an opportunity of withdrawing from the province of Mandrarey, in case the French should attempt to follow up the threat of Father Stephen. As soon as the latter had left him, he set off with his wives and slaves, to seek an asylum in the province of Machicores, which lies at the distance of about twenty-five leagues from Fort Dauphin.

Not satisfied with the experience he had already acquired, Father Stephen no sooner heard of his departure, than he resolutely determined to follow him. In vain did Chamargou endeavour to detain him—in vain did La Case represent to him the danger he incurred: furious in his zeal, he took a brother of the same order with himself, another Frenchman, and six domestics loaded with sacerdotal habits, and set out on his dangerous expedition.

After encountering difficulties and fatigue, that would have been insuperable to any thing short of the most determined perseverance, he overtook Dian Manangue the first week in Lent. The old chief, surprised rather than intimidated at his rashness, received him with the most profound respect, declaring, at the same time, that his journey would prove fruitless. This had no other effect on the monk, than to make him frantic with zeal. Regardless



of his safety, and that of his followers, he denounced him as a heretic—tore off the sacred olis—threw them into the fire—and concluded his violence by a declaration of war.

Hitherto the forbearance and moderation of the chief had been proof against the arrogance of the monk ; but such accumulated insults were no longer to be borne. He instantly ordered Father Stephen and his attendants to be massacred on the spot, and, at the same time, swore to effect the entire destruction of all the French on the island. In order to put this oath into execution, he sent his son, who had been baptized, to his brother-in-law, La Vantague, for the purpose of inducing him to unite efforts with him in breaking off the French yoke, whose insidious designs had no other tendency, than to the subversion of the usages, manners, and religion of the country. He assured him that his oli had commanded him to defend these, even at the peril of his life, and that victory was certain on his side, since the French had dared to commit such criminal excesses. He likewise informed him, that Chamargou had sent forty Frenchmen to the western coast, whom he could easily surprise and put to death. “I send my son to thee,” said he, at the conclusion of his letter, “whom thou canst put at the head of the army which thou art to despatch, in order to attack and exterminate the French. It is my oli that inspires me ; and thou well knowest the ills that will overwhelm us, if we do not faithfully obey its call. My son will give thee all the particulars

of what has happened, and thou wilt hear indignantly the perfidious proceedings of these foreigners towards me, their most faithful ally."

La Vantague had scarcely put himself upon his guard, when he felt the advantage of the information thus communicated to him. Two days after the arrival of his nephew, his spies brought tidings that the French had pitched their camp at the distance of only one league from the village where he resided.

He instantly despatched a messenger to make them an offer of provisions, and begged them to make known to him the purpose of their journey. La Forge, who commanded the detachment, returned for answer, that he had orders to subject the country to the French domination. Terrified at such a declaration, La Vantague offered him four hundred bullocks as the price of peace, and represented that his country was too far from Fort Dauphin for him to have done any thing to draw down the resentment of the colony. La Forge spurned at this offer, and fixed the price of peace at *twenty thousand bullocks*. La Vantague returned no answer to this demand; but while the French were ravaging a plantation of sugar-canes, he ordered them to be massacred, which was done. The only person who escaped with his life was a Portuguese.

This man took refuge in a marshy spot covered with reeds and stagnant water; here he remained, in concealment, up to the neck in mud and water for two days. At length the islanders, who were afraid

to venture into the water, set fire to the reeds ; this soon drove him out, but taking advantage of the smoke, he eluded them, and by dint of stratagem, succeeded in reaching Fort Dauphin, where he communicated the sad tidings of the disasters which had befallen his comrades.

The governor, instead of pursuing a different conduct in future, which alone could avert the dangers that threatened the colony, resolved to revenge their death by carrying fire and sword into the heart of the country. Putting himself at the head of forty Frenchmen, and a body of Manamboulese, while Father Manuer, the only surviving priest, carried the bloody banner, he set out on his barbarous expedition. He spared neither age nor sex ; but murdered without distinction, men, women, and children, and destroyed every village that lay in his way. The deserted donac of Dian Manangue was razed to the ground, and, in short, death and devastation marked the course he took, and the transactions of that campaign have fixed infamy and execration on his character.

At length a want of provisions obliged him to retreat. The natives, seeing no hope of successfully opposing his march, took care to remove or destroy every thing that could contribute to the support of the invaders. Thus situated, Chamargou was under the necessity of returning to Fort Dauphin ; but while he was about to pass the river Mandrare, Dian Manangue, who had been watching his motions, appeared, wearing the surplice and

square cap of Father Stephen, on the opposite bank, with an army of six thousand men, to dispute his passage. The fate of the colony would have been determined at this juncture, but for the seasonable arrival of La Case, accompanied by ten Frenchmen, and three thousand Androfaces, subjects of Dian Nong, his consort. This brave officer instantly plunged into the river, and attacked Dian Manangue, notwithstanding the disparity of numbers ; and such was the terror his name inspired, that the opposing army was instantly dislodged and put to flight. Dian Manangue himself would have fallen a sacrifice, had not Rabazé, a courageous chief, who was strongly devoted to his cause, thrown himself in the way, and thus voluntarily given his own life to save that of his sovereign. Night put an end to the slaughter, and the French thought proper to make the best of their way, under cover of the darkness, to Fort Dauphin. Here they were safe indeed from the *attacks* of the natives ; but on the other hand, the latter withheld the usual supplies of provisions, and cut off those which were procured from distant posts. At the same time a formidable army was again collected by Dian Manangue, with which he invested Fort Dauphin. The presence of such a body of men would soon have reduced the garrison to a state of starvation had not La Case found means to send them a supply of five thousand bullocks. Thus were they again saved from destruction by that extraordinary man, whose enterprises were all crowned with success. It is impos-

sible to do justice to his prudence, his courage, and his presence of mind, all which qualities were conspicuous on every occasion. In one of his expeditions, with ten Frenchmen, and two thousand natives, he defeated Dian Raveras, at the head of eighteen thousand men, and took from him *twenty thousand bullocks*, and made five thousand prisoners. These and his other successes, recommended him so powerfully to the French East-India Company, that finding themselves under the necessity of employing him, they took him into their service, sent him a lieutenant's commission, made him a present of a sword, and congratulated him on his successes. For these marks of confidence and favour, La Case returned thanks to the Company, and pledged himself that if they would send him a force of two hundred Frenchmen, he would conquer the whole island, and establish the paramount authority of the French government,—with this single condition, that they should render him answerable to none but themselves for the measures he might think proper to pursue in executing his projects. Fortunately the Company rejected his proposal; from what cause we do not learn, but the offer certainly reflects disgrace upon the memory of La Case. He appears to have had a large share of ambition after he was taken notice of by the East-India Company; and, as with Cortes in the Western Continent, that one passion bid fair to absorb all his good qualities, and render him a savage rather than a man. The conquest of the whole

island would certainly have placed him in the same rank with the conquerors of America; but what he would have gained in celebrity, he would have lost in esteem and veneration; and the proposal alone has left a stain upon his character, which all his good qualities will fail to obliterate.

In 1666, the French East-India Company, having extended their views, appointed the Marquis de Mondevergue to the general command of all the French settlements situated beyond the equinoctial line. This, of course, included Madagascar, which place was appointed the seat of his government. Thither he set sail in a frigate of thirty-six guns, followed by a fleet of nine vessels, having on board La Fage and Caron, directors of the East-India trade, an attorney general, four companies of infantry, ten chiefs of colonies, eight merchants, and thirty-two women.

The fleet arrived at Fort Dauphin on the 10th of March, 1667, and the Marquis immediately caused himself to be acknowledged admiral and governor-general of the French territories in the East. His first step was to effect a reconciliation with Dian Manangue, who was a chief too powerful to be despised. This was accomplished with the assistance of La Case; and that chief swore obedience and fidelity to the governor-general. This step insured to the colony a regular supply of provisions, and their future prospects were thus rendered more promising.

Caron did not remain long on the island; he sailed

for Surat with the greater part of the fleet, in order to take the management of that settlement.

La Fage continued at Fort Dauphin; and in November, 1670, another fleet of ten ships arrived, commanded by Monsieur de la Haye, Captain of the Navarre, a vessel of fifty-six guns. All these ships belonged to the king, to whom the East-India Company had now transferred the sovereignty of Madagascar, and were well equipped with the war complement of arms and men. Upon his arrival, La Haye was proclaimed admiral and general, with the authority of vice-roy. Chamargou was appointed second in command, and La Case major of the island. The Marquis Mondevergue, having the option of remaining on the island as governor, or returning to France, chose the latter. From what he saw of La Haye, he appears to have been convinced that harmony could not be expected with him. The wisdom and moderation of his own conduct but ill accorded with the warlike and arbitrary disposition of the other. He therefore chose to retire, and set sail for France in 1671; but he had no sooner arrived at Fort Louis, than a commissary demanded of him an account of his conduct. He now found that La Haye had sent home complaints against him, which had induced the Company to take this step. The Marquis defended himself with great spirit, and the public voice was in his favour: but his enemies were too powerful; he fell a victim to their machinations, and died a prisoner in the castle of Saumur.

Under La Haye, who possessed unlimited authority, the government of the island was conducted in a totally opposite spirit. He determined to get rid of those chiefs who did not acknowledge his authority. His first step was, in conjunction with Chamargou and La Case, to summon Dian Ramousay to surrender to the French all the arms in his possession, and, upon a refusal, to prepare for war. Dian Ramousay spurned at this demand with disdain; upon which La Case and Chamargou were ordered to besiege him in his village. This order they obeyed, and went against him with seven hundred French, and six hundred Madegasses. The attack was, however, unsuccessful. Dian Ramousay made so vigorous and gallant a resistance, that the French were obliged to retire with considerable loss. It was the general opinion, that the treacherous Chamargou, piqued at being second in command in a country where he had hitherto governed alone, and moreover not relishing his coalition with La Case, whom he had formerly treated so ill, had contributed to this defeat. Be this as it may, La Haye was so disgusted at the supposed treachery of Chamargou, that he resolved to abandon Fort Dauphin, and to retire with his forces to Surat, first touching at the Mascarenhas, now called Isle de Bourbon.

His departure was shortly after followed by the death of La Case, whose name alone kept the island in a state of subjection to the French. Their yoke had become odious and insupportable, and the natives



only waited for a favourable opportunity to retaliate upon them the cruelties and injuries they had sustained. Upon the death of Chamargou, which soon followed that of La Case, La Bretesche, his son-in-law, succeeded to the command of the colony. From this period may be dated the extinction of the French power in the South of Madagascar. Destitute of every qualification that commands respect, Bretesche found his authority lessening every day, while the constant bickerings, and increasing animosities, which arose between the French and the natives, involved them in continual wars and trouble. Despairing of success, he embarked with his family in a ship for Surat. Several Missionaries, and some of the French, followed his example; but no sooner had they left the road, than they perceived a signal of distress from the shore. The Captain immediately sent off his boats, by which he learned that Dian Ramousay, and the neighbouring chiefs, had risen upon the garrison, and massacred nearly the whole of them. The few who escaped were taken on board, leaving the natives once more free from their invaders.

## CHAP. XIV.

*Account of the Pirates—Their daring Transactions—  
Preparations for attacking them—Their Fleet destroyed  
—Gain Favour and Consequence with the Natives—  
Introduce the Slave Trade—Consequences to themselves.*

**AFTER** the abandonment of Fort Dauphin in the south of Madagascar, by Bretesche, and the consequent massacre of the garrison, the intercourse which the inhabitants had with Europeans was merely casual. The East-India ships usually touched there to take in a supply of provisions, but no further attempt was made to establish a colony; nor did anything transpire worthy of notice, until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the pirates, who, from the time that Vasco de Gama opened the route to India, had infested the Indian seas, formed an establishment at Nossy Hibraham, (or Isle St. Mary,) situated on the north-east coast of Madagascar.

These marauders had rendered themselves so formidable and notorious, by their daring attacks on large ships, and by the valuable prizes which they continually took, that about the year 1722, those nations who were interested in the India trade, began to make preparations for putting a stop to their depredations, which were carried to an astonishing length. In 1721, they had attacked and seized a

large Portuguese man of war, having on board Count Receira, and the Archbishop of Goa—and on the same day had taken another ship carrying thirty guns. These two vessels lay off the Isle of Bourbon, and, it appears, were not captured without some hard fighting on both sides. In consequence of these daring exploits, a combination was formed in Europe, with the determination of scouring the seas of these robbers.

Alarmed at these preparations, the pirates took refuge in St. Mary's Isle; and seeing a probability that the time was coming, when all their courage would be of but little avail to them, they began assiduously to cultivate the good will of the natives. By contracting alliances with them, they gained their confidence; and by continually bringing in richly freighted prizes, their mode of obtaining which was totally unknown to the inhabitants, they supplied them with articles that were in great request; and on the other hand, gave a value to the produce of the island, for which, before that time, the natives could but seldom find a market. They likewise compared the conduct of the pirates with that of some other Europeans, who, on occasionally touching at the island, had committed great depredations upon them, wantonly burning their villages, plundering their plantations, and either murdering or carrying off their wives and children; while the pirates, knowing that their very existence depended upon a good understanding with the Madegasses, always carried them-

selves in a conciliatory manner towards them, adopted their customs and manners, and treated them at all times with friendship and respect.

The period soon arrived when they experienced the benefit of this line of conduct. A large armament was fitted out well manned and appointed, which attacked them with a most determined resolution. Accustomed to war and to success, the pirates made long and vigorous resistance, but it was to no purpose; their enemy was too powerful, and having put them to flight, pursued them even to the place of their retreat, insomuch that they were obliged to set fire to their vessels, in order to prevent them falling into their hands.

Being thus at once deprived of the usual sources of their existence, and knowing that as soon as the stores of merchandize, which they had been enabled to collect by their dangerous mode of life, were exhausted, their importance with the natives would sink, they began to reflect upon the means of preserving that importance, and at last concerted a plan, which, in the sequel, completely answered their ends. This was nothing less than the introduction of the slave-trade.

We have before detailed the manner in which the slave-trade was introduced. Numberless attempts had been made to induce the natives to adopt it before, but to no purpose. The French writers are very much disposed to ascribe the introduction of this horrid traffic entirely to the pirates; but we are

strongly inclined to believe, that if there was not a specific agreement between those people and their countrymen the French, on the subject, it was perfectly well understood, that if they could induce the natives to begin the trade, it would constitute an ample atonement for all their past transgressions.

In the year 1722, soon after the destruction of the fleet belonging to the pirates, the Bethalimenes, a people inhabiting the interior, had resorted in great numbers to the village, where the pirates had deposited their stores, with the view of purchasing such articles as were useful or convenient. Those most in request, were India stuffs, Masulepatam handkerchiefs, muslins, and calicoes. The people inhabiting the sea-coasts where the pirates also resided, were the Antivares and Manivoulese. The greatest cordiality subsisted between these people and the Bethalimenes, towards whom they acted with hospitality and friendship, both on their own account and that of the pirates.

But when the Bethalimenes saw that the source from which the pirates drew their wealth, was dried up by the absolute destruction of their fleet, they began to prepare for returning to their villages with the goods they had purchased. This was the period the pirates chose for their purpose: they represented to the people, amongst whom they resided, that those valuable effects belonged of right to them, as a return for the kindness they themselves had experienced, and that if they suffered them to be taken

away now, they would be lost and dispersed about the country. The respect due to the strangers was long before it could be overcome; but at length the Antivares and Manivoulese yielded, and attacked the Bethalimenes. A bloody war ensued, in which the pirates cautiously avoided interfering in a public manner; but they secretly encouraged both parties, selling arms to the Antivares, and representing to the others that they had right on their side. At length the latter, who did not come from home prepared for a protracted contest, found their ammunition expended; and at this juncture the pirates advised them to the act of exchanging their prisoners of war for arms and gunpowder, as we have before related. Being a brave people, the numbers were considerable, and they were enabled, by such a supply as they obtained in exchange for them, to return home without any further resistance on the part of the enemy. The consequences that followed this event, as it respects the Madegasses, are already before the reader; but we have yet to relate in what manner the pirates were affected by it. Those men, or rather monsters, who a few months before were the scourge and the curse of the East-India trade, who were looked upon with horror and detestation, and for whose utter destruction many nations (otherwise filled with jealousy of each other) united in forming a powerful armament, became all at once of such consequence to their countrymen, that their protection was eagerly sought; and

they were employed in the trade as factors or agents, all transactions of this kind, in that quarter of the island, passing through their hands.

The French writers may endeavour to cast the odium of this transaction on the pirates ; but while we know that numerous attempts had been previously made by the French to introduce the traffic in slaves into Madagascar, both by treachery and open force—while they had in vain endeavoured by argument to induce them to sell their prisoners and malefactors,—and while we read that from the period the pirates succeeded in their nefarious attempts, they rose into notice, and became not merely sufferable, but of the first importance to their countrymen, who no longer disdained to seek their friendship ;—we can never believe but that the pirates were secretly instigated to the act by the French merchants, and that afterwards they were by no means considered by them, or the French government, in the same light.

We wish our own countrymen were clear from the blood of the Madegasses ; but the history of that country furnishes too many instances of the large share that England had in the slave transactions, to allow us to exculpate her. As early as the year 1724, when Drury was on the island, British ships were continually arriving, which rendered it necessary for fresh wars to be undertaken in order to supply them. Happily, England has washed her hands of the trade, and, as far as lies in her power, endeavoured to atone for the miseries that Madagascar has suffered through her

means, by effecting the abolition of the slave-trade on the island.\* But many years must elapse, ere its baneful effects can be entirely removed; the present, and probably the succeeding generation, must pass away, before the recollection of the unhallowed riches, accruing to her chiefs from the sale of slaves, is obliterated from their minds.

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\* We cannot help exulting in the thought, that our native country has set such an example to other nations as the abolition of the slave-trade. Although her efforts to prevent its continuance have failed in too many instances, and some, even amongst us, are found base enough still to engage in the traffic; yet, if our observation has not deceived us, England has been rising in *moral* greatness from the *very period* that the act of abolition took place. Like the individual who has overcome a vicious habit, she seems to feel a return of self respect; her *moral institutions* have increased and flourished to a degree unknown to former years; her *moral influence* has extended from one end of the earth to the other; and the most unparalleled exertions have been made, and are still making, to impart to other countries the blessings her people enjoy.



## CHAP. XV.

*Attempt to establish a Colony at St. Mary's Isle and Foule Point—Monsieur Gosse, assisted by the Princess Betie, takes Possession—Accused of Sacrilege—Massacre of the French—Government of the Isle of France retaliates—Peace restored by Betie and Bigorne—Celebrated Cabar to establish a Treaty of Commerce at Foule Point—Speech of Rabefin—Treaty agreed on—Sacrifice—Bigorne appointed Commissioner of Trade—Makes War on John Harre—Recalled and disgraced—Death of John Harre, and Return of Bigorne to Madagascar.*

SETTING aside the influence which the pirates had acquired, the island remained free from the domination of foreigners until the year 1745, when the French East-India Company conceived the desire of again trying their fortune in establishing a colony there, and commissioned Monsieur Gosse to go and take possession of the Isle of St. Mary, in the name of the Company.

John Harre was the chief of Foule Point at that time. This man was the son of Tamsimalo, who was descended from an old pirate and the daughter of a powerful chief, and who seized the sovereign power upon the death of his father. The reign of Tamsimalo was not signalized by any extraordinary

events, but his memory is much venerated by the people. He died in 1745, and was buried in St. Mary's.

The power of his son, John Harre, was very circumscribed ; and, by his misconduct, he forfeited the esteem of his subjects. He chose Foule Point for the place of his residence, and left the government of St. Mary to his mother and sister, the latter of whom was known by the name of Betie. This young lady appears to have possessed considerable charms both of person and mind, and she was greatly beloved by the people of St. Mary.

As soon as Monsieur Gosse arrived at the island, he went round it to take possession of it, in which he was accompanied by Betie, although this honour, according to the custom of the country, belonged to Tamsimalo's widow, instead of the daughter. This lady, who was of a haughty imperious temper, was highly offended at the neglect of Gosse, and swore to be revenged on him for this neglect and open insult. Gosse seems to have set very light by her anger for some time, and went on to establish the colony upon the best footing it was capable of. Many circumstances tended to counteract his plans, and, amongst the rest, the old enemy, *fever*, made its appearance. The mortality was so great by the latter end of autumn, that the directors of the Isle of France were obliged to send fresh recruits ; and this occurred so repeatedly towards the close of the year, that it was then called the grave, or church-yard of the French.

Our historian remarks, however, that the directors took special care not to send any person there whose loss would prove at all injurious to society.

In the mean time Gosse appears to have been very assiduous in his attentions to Betie, who was strongly attached to him. Her mother formed several plots for the destruction of the French, but Betie as often counteracted them, until at length she brought such a heavy accusation against Gosse, that Betie dared no longer to advocate his cause.

The charge was no less than that of having dared to infringe upon the sacredness of her late husband's tomb, for the sake of the riches which it was well known to contain. We know not whether this accusation was true or false; but it raised such a ferment, that the destruction of the French was from that moment determined on. The period fixed was Christmas Eve, 1754, when the islanders rose in a body, fell upon the establishment, and massacred them to a man.

As soon as this dreadful event was known at the Isle of France, the governor ordered an armed vessel to proceed to St. Mary, and punish the natives with the utmost severity. They performed their task to the very letter. While the troops ravaged the island, burned the villages, and massacred the inhabitants, the vessel got their guns to bear upon the piroguas of those who attempted to escape to the main land. Some of these, full of natives, were sunk: in one of them was the widow of Tamsimalo, who had embarked with an intention of getting to the bay of Antongil,

but, in spite of every exertion, a shot reached the boat, by which she, and several of those who accompanied her, were killed : the rest were made prisoners, among whom was Betie. She was immediately carried to the Isle of France, and taken before the supreme council, before whom she justified herself completely, by proving that her mother had been the sole cause of the massacre of the French. She also convinced them that her connection with Gosse had endangered her life, and that it would no longer be safe for her to remain at St. Mary, as her attachment to the French had completely alienated the affections and confidence of the people from her. Convinced of her innocence, the council sent Betie to her brother John Harre, at Foule Point, with considerable presents, requesting him to employ every means in his power to re-establish peace and harmony between the natives of that district and the French. This was as much for the interest of one party as the other. The people were so terrified at the dreadful havoc made by the French at St. Mary, that they retired to the interior of the island. Commerce was suspended, and the Isle of France, which drew all its supplies from Madagascar, was in danger of famine, unless confidence could be again restored, and the trade revived. Betie, by the influence she possessed over her brother, was considered a proper person to accomplish this ; and united herself in the task with one Bigorne, an intelligent and active person, who had been a soldier in the service of the East-India Company.

This man had acquired the Madegasse language, and, by his open and steady conduct, gained the affections of the islanders, whom he soon brought to terms with the French; so that the commerce with them was very speedily renewed. His conduct gained the entire approbation of the government at the Isle of France, who plainly saw of what consequence his services were likely to be, on account of his influence over the natives at Foule Point.

By this man's assiduity and address, the chiefs of Foule Point were persuaded to engage in a treaty of commerce with the emissaries of the French East-India Company; and a special cabar was appointed to be held on the occasion, at which an immense multitude of people, and all the neighbouring chiefs, were present. One of the orators, named Rabefin, was possessed of considerable eloquence; his speech, which was as follows, is highly interesting.

The orator, after having saluted all the chiefs, advanced towards the French, and making a profound obeisance, he addressed himself to Bigorne, who performed the part of interpreter, and thus began:—

“ You know, O Bigorne! that for more than eight years, the white men have come hither to trade with the Madegasses; and can you say, that a white man was ever killed by any of our nation? We have always received you, not only as brothers, but as lords of the country.

“ When the French asked from us oxen and rice, did we ever refuse them?

“ When they wished to raise palisades, and construct houses, have we not gone to the forests to procure timber for that purpose?

“ Have those who have come hither before you, or those who are here now, ever had any cause of complaint against us? Have they not drawn water from our fountains?—Have they not cut down the trees of our forests, without any man of Foule Point asking them—Why do you so?—The people of the south, and those in the north, and more recently still, those of St. Mary, massacred the French, and made war upon them; but those of Foule Point never attacked any of them; on the contrary, they have given them every assistance in their power; and they have at all times testified their kindness and friendship towards them.

“ Are the chiefs of Foule Point, then, less powerful than their neighbours? O, Bigorne! more powerful they are. Do they fear to carry on war against the whites?—No; who dares to make war on John Harre, the illustrious son of Tamsimalo, our sovereign and our father?

“ What are the white men, who would be rash enough to attack those formidable and invincible chiefs here present—Marouat, Ramisi, and Ramatoa? Would we not shed even the last drop of our blood in their support?

“ It is to our friendship, therefore, and to our goodness of heart alone, that the French are indebted for the kind treatment which they have experienced at Foule Point, since they first frequented that port.

“ Let us now proceed to examine the conduct of the French towards us.

“ Why, Bigorne, hast thou erected a palisade of large stakes, much more extensive and stronger than that which was erected formerly, without having deigned to ask permission of John Harre and the other chiefs? In this hast thou followed the ancient usage? Speak—answer!—Hast thou offered them the smallest present?—But you observe silence—you blush—you are conscious of your guilt—you look towards them—you beg forgiveness. Here, in thy name, I ask pardon of John Harre, our sovereign, who presides over this illustrious assembly, and these generous and invincible chiefs, for thy imprudence. We love thee, Bigorne; but never in future abuse our affection. Swear that thou wilt never commit the like faults.—Such errors will for ever alienate from thee, without hopes of return, the hearts of the inhabitants of Foule Point; and, to preserve them, take the oaths, that our interest and thine shall be hereafter the same. Ask, then, of thy chiefs here assembled, why, since the arrival of the last seven ships, the captains have still neglected to make the usual presents, which serve to promote a good understanding in those exchanges which the whites wish to exist with Madegasses? Why have not these vessels brought effects to pay the debts contracted by the French above a year ago?

“ We have sold them, on credit, according to the rules of fair dealing, provisions of every kind, without

any other security than small bits of paper, which contained, as they assured us, a promise of being paid in three moons. Why has this solemn promise remained to the present day unfulfilled? This is compelling us to give up all commerce with the whites, or at least entirely to withdraw that confidence which we formerly had in their words and oaths.

“ A large vessel, which touched here last year, was in the most urgent want of provisions, without having effects to purchase them. The merchants of Foule Point, however, supplied their crew with oxen and rice, and at the same price at which they could have bought them for ready money.

“ They promised to send us payment by the first vessel which should come from the Isle of France.— Since that period *twelve* have arrived; but they all refused to discharge this just debt.

“ Wilt thou now say, O Bigorne! that the people of Foule Point have behaved dishonestly towards the French?

“ Wilt thou say, also, that in giving a trade-musket in exchange for an ox, thou payest too dear for it?

“ Wilt thou say, that two yards of blue cloth is a just value of a measure of rice, weighing fifty pounds? Thou either thinkest us very ignorant of the price of provisions at the Isle of France, or thou hast formed the mad project of giving laws to us, instead of receiving them from us.

“ Is it not true,” continued the orator, addressing



himself to the assembly, "that you wish to deal with these strangers hereafter on more just and more equitable terms?"

The assembly testified, by a general and tumultuous acclamation, that such was their desire. Bigorne then wished to raise his voice in answer; but the orator commanded him to be silent; and resumed his harangue, by order of John Harre and the other chiefs.

"The following," said he, "are the conditions prescribed by the merchants of Foule Point:—The measure of rice shall be diminished, when, in measuring it, the whites endeavour to heap up the rice, by knocking on the bottom of the measure, in order to increase its contents: they will not suffer the measure to be heaped as heretofore."

This observation made the company smile.

"An ox shall no longer be given in exchange for a paltry trade-fusee: a good soldier's musket shall be the price of an ox.

"A piece of blue cloth shall contain two yards, according to the ancient measure.

"The bamboo of gunpowder shall be increased in such a manner, that three bamboos shall contain one hundred charges for a musket. The people at Foule Point, who serve the whites in the capacity of *scullions* or domestics, shall receive a trade-fusee as wages for thirty days' service."

After this, the orator, addressing the chiefs and the assembly, said, "Are not these your latest wishes?"

The cry of "Yes!" then resounded from all quarters, intermixed with praises and approbation.

When this noise had subsided, he cried out, with a voice like thunder, "Thou hearest, Bigorne, the wish of the cabar; it is the law of the chiefs—it is the desire of the people who trade with the whites. Explain fully to thy masters what I have just now proposed. If they accept the terms, we will confirm the treaty, by a solemn sacrifice.—If they will not accept it, let them depart!—We have no provisions to give them."

We know not whether Rabefin held the office of attorney or solicitor-general to John Harre; but we think our readers will agree with us, that this speech would have reflected no discredit upon a more polished mind. It was translated by Bigorne to Monsieur Poivre, who attended on behalf of the government of the Isle of France. That gentleman, who possessed highly cultivated talents, was struck with surprise and delight at the energy of its language, and with the force and solidity of its reasoning. He ordered Bigorne to inform the assembly, that the merchants of Foule Point should be immediately paid for all the provisions they had supplied to the French ships. He also augmented the salaries of those domestics who were in the service of the whites: but he had no authority to make any alteration in the usual price of provisions. He employed every thing of a conciliatory nature that could awaken the sensibility of the chiefs; and, treating them as friends

and brothers, recommended peace in the strongest terms. This speech, which was translated into Madegasse by Bigorne, seemed to make but little impression on the assembly. The orator, however, appeared fully convinced by it, and, by his advice, the treaty was agreed to amidst general acclamations.

The conclusion of this treaty was not a matter of small importance to the French. Their vessels near the island, were in the most pressing want of provisions : their crews consisted of six hundred men, for whose sustenance three oxen a day, and a proportionable quantity of rice, were requisite. They must therefore have complied with the conditions laid down by the orator, had they been enforced by the authority of the chiefs. We shall see in the sequel, that this was not much feared on the part of the French.

The ratification of the treaty took place immediately, and was performed with the utmost solemnity. The orator slaughtered an ox, the blood of which was received into an earthen vessel, and a quantity of sea-water, pimento, pulverized gun-flints, a small portion of earth, and gunpowder mingled with it : these ingredients were moistened with *tafa*, a species of rum. Two leaden bullets were used to pound and incorporate with each other the different ingredients, which was thus rendered liquid. He then pronounced imprecations on those who should drink this potion, and afterwards break their oaths,

wishing that the evil spirit might convert it into poison for them. Then, taking two assagayes, he dipped the points of them in the liquor, while John Harre sprinkled a few drops of it on the ground.

Holding a knife in his right hand, and first invoking the God of the Whites, then the God of the Blacks, he besought them with a loud voice to instil in the minds of the two parties, peace, concord, amity, friendship, and sincerity. Then striking, with his knife, the points of the two assagayes, which had been dipped into the liquor, he denounced the most horrid imprecations against those who should first violate the treaty.

“If the Whites,” said he, “break their oath, may this beverage become poison to them; may those hurricanes which fly with fury from the four quarters of the heavens, fall upon their ships; may they be swallowed up by the waves; may the corpses of those wicked men be torn by the frightful monsters that dwell in the abysses of the ocean.

“Hark, John Harre!—listen attentively to the voice of the mighty genius who inspires me. Should the people of Foule Point be so base, so wicked, as to violate the solemn treaty, may they fall by the sword of their enemies; may their bellies burst; and may their filthy carcasses become the food of crocodiles!

“Ought not the invisible spirit, who presides over this assembly, to be avenged? Ought not he to punish the perjured, since he receives their oaths?

All men, whether white or black, are equal in his sight ; all are subject to his supreme will—he exacts from us all the same fidelity, the same good faith, under the pain of incurring punishments equally terrible and severe.”

These imprecations were repeated three times by the orator, with such vehemence of gesture and utterance, that it made an impression on the cabar, which it would baffle the powers of language to describe.

In this state of terror and agitation, John Harre and the rest of the chiefs, with a trembling hand, put about a spoonful of this disgusting liquor into a leaf of *raven*, and swallowed it with a thousand horrid grimaces and distortions of face and body. Their example was followed by most of those assisting at the ceremony on the part of the natives : but all that Bigorne could say, was insufficient to induce the French to taste it ; and the most they would do, was to put it up to their mouths, and feign drinking it, though he represented to him that this ridiculous farce was essential to the stability of the treaty.

Rabefin then slaughtered the rest of the victims, and the cabar terminated with a grand feast, accompanied by dancing, music, games, and the most noisy and joyful mirth.

Perhaps the reader is little prepared to hear of treachery in this orator—that while he was thus advocating the cause of his countrymen, he had actually sold himself, and the advantages that might

have accrued from his speech, to the French, before the commencement of the cabar. Yet such was the case; though a man of great natural powers, and standing high in the opinion of his countrymen, his moral character had received a taint from his *intercourse with Europeans*, who had corrupted him, and he became crafty and designing. Bigorne, who was the agent of the French, as well as interpreter to both parties, was well acquainted with him, and saw the necessity of bribing him in two ways; publicly by paying him a great deal of deference and respect, and privately by making him considerable presents. In consequence of which, depending upon the strength of his eloquence, and the influence he had acquired over the chiefs, he had formally agreed to the resolutions previous to the cabar, without their concurrence; and yet at that meeting, by the mere force of his declamation, he made them responsible for the fulfilment of the treaty.

The day after the conclusion of the treaty, the market at Foule Point was abundantly supplied with provisions of every description, and the ships laid in their stores at a low price.

As the establishment at Foule Point was merely a factory for the purpose of trade, and as Bigorne had acquitted himself so well in the discharge of his office, Monsieur Poivre, the intendant at the Isle of France, recommended him in the strongest manner to the French East-India Company, who, in consequence,

raised him from the office of interpreter, to that of commissioner of the affairs of trade, and the victualling of ships for the whole island of Madagascar, under the orders of the administration of the Isle of France. They had no reason to repent of this choice. He conducted their affairs with prudence and ability, until the year 1762, when he was recalled to the Isle of France for having made war on John Harre. That chief had committed great depredations on several others who were in strict league with the French. The assistance of Bigorne was demanded, but he endeavoured for a long time to preserve peace amongst them to no purpose. At length he was induced, from motives of policy, to declare in favour of the chiefs against John Harre, and he agreed at their joint request to take the command of the combined armies, on a condition which was calculated to lessen him in their estimation, had not they entertained so high an opinion of his wisdom. It was, that as the success of the war depended upon his safety, he should not be required to expose himself to the fire of the enemy. However contrary this conduct appeared to their ideas of courage, his influence prevailed, and after expressing some surprise, they ranged themselves under his banners. La Bigorne made them go through some simple manœuvres, and finding them docile and submissive, he led them towards the enemy, and, when within sight of them, he strictly prohibited them from beginning the combat until he gave the signal for battle.

The enemy had the advantage in point of numbers, but the superior tactics of Bigorne secured him an easy victory. He had chosen an advantageous position, which John Harre was unable to judge of, and therefore attacked them in a resolute manner. The first charge proved decisive; though made with vigour, they were repulsed in so terrible a manner, that they fled precipitately, and their chief could not again lead them on to the combat.

John Harre had hitherto been considered invincible; but this defeat lessened him greatly in the eyes of his subjects. When informed that his enemies were commanded by Bigorne, and that the latter had not appeared in the action, he exclaimed, "How could I defend myself against the *invisible spirit* of a white man which attacked me? However, I will be revenged—I will quit Foule Point, and retire to the Bay of Antongil. My removal from that port will alarm the merchants, and the markets will no longer be supplied. Commerce will in the meantime be at a stand, and La Bigorne's chiefs will recall him to the Isle of France. My departure, therefore, promises me a speedy deliverance from my most formidable enemy."

This prediction was soon verified; the merchants of Foule Point were in the utmost consternation at his defeat and subsequent departure, and broke off all commercial intercourse with the French. A few of the friendly chiefs did all in their power to supply the markets, but they experienced so much opposition,



as obliged them to desist. The French ships which arrived for provisions, after the commanders had vainly endeavoured to restore peace and harmony amongst the people, were obliged to return to the Isle of France, destitute of supplies, and in the most deplorable condition.

- Their united complaints procured the immediate recall of Bigorne, who was disgraced. He attempted to justify himself, but failed. Nor do we see on what grounds he could justly attack a sovereign, in whose dominions he had found protection, and who had in no respect injured *him*.

The departure of Bigorne was instantly followed by the return of John Harre to Foule Point: he met with a much better reception than he expected, or perhaps deserved; but the fact is, the merchants and chiefs found they could do nothing without him in commerce, and consequently it was to their interest to have him back. The trade soon resumed its wonted activity, but it did not continue long. Secret enmity and hatred still continued to create in their breasts the seeds of fresh discord; and before many months expired, the war broke out with more violence than ever. It proved tedious and destructive; but at length it was ended by the death of John Harre, who was slain in 1767, by the Manivoulese, who plundered his donac, and enriched themselves with his spoils. He was never beloved either by his allies or subjects. Amongst the former, he was turbulent, unjust, and factious; and towards the latter, he was

tyrannical and cruel ; so that by his death, Madagascar was delivered from a continual incitement to insurrection and war.

His son Hyavi succeeded to the sovereignty ; but advantages being taken of his youth, his authority and possessions were curtailed, so that he held only a small part of what his father had acquired. At the commencement of his reign, the French East-India Company had transferred the government of the Isles of France and Bourbon, to their sovereign, and Monsieur Poivre had been appointed intendant of the colonies at those places. These circumstances, added to the death of John Harre, removed every obstacle in the way of Bigorne's return to Madagascar, and he accordingly arrived at Foule Point, where his presence had become highly necessary. He was received in the most cordial manner by the inhabitants, who bestowed upon him flattering testimonies of esteem and friendship. They had ever entertained a high opinion of his talents and integrity, and they now chose him to be the arbiter of all their differences. He re-established peace and harmony amongst the chiefs in the northern part of the island, where he remained as commissioner of trade, until Benyowsky was appointed governor-general, and fixed his establishment at the Bay of Antongil, the account of which will form the subject of a future chapter.

## CHAP. XVI.

*Maudave appointed to establish a Colony at Fort Dauphin—His Views on the subject—Design relinquished—Probable Reasons—Proposal made to Count de Benyowsky—Sketch of his Life—Arrives in France—Receives an Application from the French Government respecting a Colony at Madagascar—Appointed Governor—Conduct of the Governor and Commissary at the Isle of France—Arrives in Madagascar.*

IN the year 1767, Monsieur de Maudave presented to the King of France, through his minister the Duke de Praslin, a plan for the establishment of a colony at Fort Dauphin, which was approved by him. From the copy of this document, which we have perused, it appears to have been drawn up on a liberal and enlightened principle, and was well calculated to promote the welfare of the inhabitants, as well as to answer the purpose of the French government. It was founded on the principle, that a purely military establishment would never produce the desired effect, and that it was only by conciliatory means the attachment of the natives was to be gained. "There is no necessity," it says, "of sending troops and squadrons for this conquest, nor for transporting a whole society at a great

expense: better arms, and better means, will promote this establishment without expending much money. It is only by the force of example, morals, religion, and a superior policy, that we propose to subdue Madagascar. The society there is already formed, and nothing is necessary but to invite it to us, and to direct it according to our views, which can meet with no obstacles, as they will interest the Madegasses themselves by the advantage of a reciprocal exchange." Upon this principle, he proposed, that as soon as he had in some measure secured a footing amongst the natives, by a short residence at Fort Dauphin, the principal seat for colonization should be transferred from that place to Franchere, a beautiful village, which lies on the banks of the river of the same name, at the distance of three leagues from Fort Dauphin. This river is navigable for small ships, twenty leagues from its mouth; and not far from the sea is the lake of Amboule, which we have before described.

At this spot he proposed to establish his colony for the sole purposes of trade, and on the principle of mutual advantage. And had such an establishment been formed when the French first went to Madagascar, there is not a doubt but that it would have succeeded. But the many acts of aggression, which the French had committed, had disgusted the natives: they remembered, and highly resented, the cruelty they had experienced; and, whatever professions might be made by Monsieur Maudave, they were too jealous of their liberty,

and too suspicious, to suffer themselves again to be deceived.

M. Maudave took formal possession of the government of Fort Dauphin in the year 1768, and immediately went about the execution of his plan ; but it was soon given up by the French government, who pretended to have obtained new light upon the subject, by which they perceived that the establishment was founded on *false principles*. They also declared that " it was utterly impossible to afford the advances of every kind required by M. Maudave in favour of his new colony." Such are the reasons given by Monsieur de Boynes, the French minister, in a letter subsequently written to Messrs. Tournay and Maillart, relative to the undertaking of Count Benyowsky. We have no doubt but that after the experience the natives had had of the ambition and cruelty of the French, it would have been difficult to persuade them to admit of such an establishment as Monsieur Maudave proposed, in the interior of the island ; but there is strong ground for belief, that the principal, if not the sole cause of its relinquishment, was the expense it would have involved, and the supplies that would have been requisite. It must be recollected that just at that period the American struggle for independence took place ; and the large share which France had in that affair, rendered it necessary for her to make a reserve of her finances, in order to assist the Americans.

This circumstance, added to the naturally parsimonious disposition of the French government,

induced them to relinquish an undertaking, which, considering the opposition of the neighbouring chiefs, would in all probability require large supplies to support.

After the return of Monsieur Maudave to Europe, the French government made another proposal on the subject of establishing a colony at Madagascar, to Count Benyowsky, a Polish nobleman of distinction. As the history of this celebrated individual caused a considerable stir in this country, and, indeed, throughout Europe, at the period of which we are writing, and is in some measure necessary to throw light upon the subsequent transactions, we shall present the reader with a short account of his life, as extracted from a letter written by himself to the governor of the Isle of France.

Count Benyowsky, otherwise Baron d'Aladar, was born in Hungary, of an illustrious family, and served as a general in the armies of the Empress of Russia. His father was of the house of Aladar XIII., and his mother was descended from the family of the Counts of Rerary.

After the death of the King of Poland, in 1765, he went to Warsaw, to support the interest of the successor to the crown of Poland, whose kingdom was about to be invaded. He had not been there long before an order was issued by Prince Repnin, the Russian minister, for his arrest, which obliged him to decamp, and remain incognito till a turn should take place in public affairs. Shortly after, the general

confederation of Bar was declared, which he was invited to join by Marshal Pulawsky ; and, in consequence, he entered into the combined army at Cracow, under the command of Marshal Czarnowsky. Here he was made prisoner by the Muscovites, but ransomed himself with the sum of two thousand ducats. He next obtained the rank of colonel and general, under the confederation of Bar, and served against the Muscovites in several engagements ; till at last he was wounded and taken prisoner, with several other noblemen, and was carried to Cazan ; from whence he found means to transmit a letter to the Bishop of Cracow, acquainting him with his situation.

Being allowed his liberty in the city, he was requested by two princes, who, like himself, were captives, to convey letters to Kaluga, which task he executed by a stratagem : from Kaluga he went to Cazan, where he was again put under arrest and taken to Kaluga, whence he had just before returned, after executing the commissions entrusted to his care.

At Kaluga he found means to engage the governor in his interest, and they concerted together a plan of escape to Poland. Every thing was ready to facilitate their flight, when an officer of the guards arrived from Petersburg, with orders to put the governor under arrest. The latter, however, prevented the execution of these orders by killing the officer, and sought safety by flight.

Benyowsky and the rest of the prisoners were

the next day loaded with chains, and conveyed to Petersburg, where all further communication with each other was prevented.

He was shortly after summoned before Orlow and Czernichew, who endeavoured to extract from him many important particulars; but not being able to effect their purpose, either by threats, or promises of pardon, he was remanded to prison. Some days after, he was again summoned before the commission, who compelled him to sign the following declaration :—

“ I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I not only wished to break my chains, but that I committed assassination, and have been guilty of treason against her Imperial Majesty; and if her Majesty, through her natural goodness, shall be pleased to soften the rigour of my sentence, I hereby engage, after recovering my liberty, never to set a foot again in the dominions of her Majesty, much less to bear arms against her.

BARON MAURICE AUGUSTUS ALADAR  
DE BENYOWSKI,

*General of the First Confederation.*

*Petersburg, Nov. 22, 1769.*

Two days after signing this paper, an officer came to him at midnight, at the head of twenty-eight men, and putting irons on his legs, hurried him into a carriage, and set off towards Moscow; and from thence, by a tedious and painful route, during which he was fed only with bread and water, as far as Tobolsk, the



capital of Siberia. Here they made but a short stay, and then crossed the deserts of Tartary, drawn by dogs. Their journey lasted, with little intermission, from the 24th of November to the 20th of May following, when they reached the port of Ochozk, on the shores of the North Pacific; where the count was kindly received by the governor, and found two Russian officers, of whom he had some knowledge, and with whom he formed an intimacy.

On the 3d of September following, he was put on board a ship and conveyed to the port of Bolsao, which was the last place of his destination. Here he found means to engage a number of persons in a conspiracy, in order to regain their liberty; and a plan was concerted, which, in the sequel, succeeded.

The 25th of May, 1771; was the day fixed on for putting their project into execution; and, as he was the only person amongst them who was able to work a ship, he was chosen chief of the enterprise. The conspiracy was unfortunately discovered about a month before the time appointed; and an order was issued by the governor, for carrying Benyowsky away to some other place the following week. Alarmed at the circumstance, his fellow exiles came to consult with him upon it. He told them, if they would support him, he would engage to see them through the danger. No time was to be lost. The lieutenant who guarded him was his friend, and supplied him with arms, privately, for himself and his companions; at the head of whom he attacked the fort in the night,

killed the governor, and some of his people, and took the rest prisoners.

The next morning they entered Bolsao sword in hand, meeting with very faint resistance. They next attacked Kamtschatka, which they took without opposition, and immediately seized the ships in the harbour, arrested the secretary of the senate, seized the effects of two hundred inhabitants, and then went down to the harbour, where they made choice of three of the strongest vessels, and dismasted the rest.

Having cleared his ships from the ice, he embarked with every thing necessary, on the 12th of May, 1771, having on board sixty-seven persons; viz. eight officers, eight married women, a young woman called the princess, and fifty of the crew. In this manner he left Kamtschatka, and sailing south-east, came, after a variety of adventures, to the western coast of America, under the sixtieth degree of latitude, but was not able to land on account of the violence of the wind. Sailing south-east and south-west, he arrived at an island, called by the Russians Urum-sir, situated under 53°. 45'. latitude.

This, according to the account of the baron, is an American island, and he was received with friendship by the natives, which induced him to remain there some days. After refreshing himself and his men with the produce of the island, he set sail again on the 27th of June, and steered south-west, suffering much from the inconstancy of the winds and the want

of fresh water, which obliged them to drink sea-water, rendered potable by mixing flour and whale oil. On the 15th of July, he arrived at an island in 32°. 45'. latitude, the beauty of whose situation, and other attractions, induced him to call it Liquoris. He set sail again after a few days, and in his route fell in with several islands, at some of which he was kindly received, while at others he met with a rough reception. At the island of Formosa, he entered a port in 23°. 15'. latitude, and, attempting to land, was attacked by the natives, who killed three of his men; upon which he united himself to a king in a different part of the island, and, attacking them in turn, made a terrible slaughter amongst them. After leaving Formosa, he sailed towards the coast of China, and at length arrived at Macao on the 22d of September, 1771. This place belonged to the Empress, and the governor received him with every mark of friendship, and gave him permission to land his men, and hoist the French flag. Here he sold his vessels, and embarked his crew and himself in two French trading-vessels, in which he arrived at the Isle of France, about the beginning of March, 1772, having overcome difficulties and dangers that appear incredible, when we consider the deficiency of almost every necessary for so long a voyage, that existed on board his ships.\*

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\* The memoirs and travels of this extraordinary man, were published in two volumes quarto, and are well worth perusing.

His reception at the Isle of France was not of the most favourable description. It would be a difficult matter, at this distance of time, to judge precisely of the merits or demerits of the count: were we to believe the French writers, we should conclude him to be both a rash adventurer, and a crafty designing knave:—but the French were his confirmed enemies, and their accounts of him are to be read with caution and great allowance. It shall be our endeavour to give an impartial account of the transactions in which he appears, as connected with the history of Madagascar; and leave it to the reader to make his own conclusions from the facts that we shall state.

His stay at the Isle of France was short; but at his departure he intimated the probability of his applying to the government of France, for a commission to establish a colony in Madagascar; which appears to have been treated by the French, at the Isle of France, with ridicule and contempt: and it would appear that the intendant wrote to the French minister of marine, to prejudice him against Benyowsky.

Upon his arrival in France, and after his various surprising adventures had transpired, he received a communication from the French minister, Monsieur de Boynes, of the intention of the government to make another attempt to establish a colony at Madagascar, for the purposes of trade rather than conquest; and inviting him to take charge of the undertaking, as governor-general. Whether these overtures arose from a previous application on the part of Benyowsky

or his friends, or whether the extent of his knowledge, and his firm and enterprising character, had pointed him out to the minister as a fit person to superintend the undertaking, does not appear. Certain it is, that Monsieur de Boynes expressed the greatest confidence in him, in his letter of instructions to the governor and commissary at the Isle of France. "No person," says he, "has appeared more capable of carrying his Majesty's intentions into effect, than Monsieur Baron de Benyowsky. In the course of his travels by sea, he has learned the manner of treating with savage people; and, to a great share of firmness, he has united that mildness of character which suits a design of this nature."

In confirmation of this opinion, the minister, not approving the plan which had been drawn up by one of the government agents, ordered Benyowsky to draw up his own plan, which he did, and it was approved both by the king and his ministers.

The first step which was taken after this, may be considered as the cause of failure in the undertaking. The minister, instead of raising the necessary supplies in France, left it to the government of the Isle of France to furnish them; by which he, in effect, threw the count into the power of his enemies, who were absolutely interested in the counteraction of his plans. He remonstrated against this, but the minister could not be prevailed on to make such an alteration as would secure him against the bad effects of the arrangement.

These began to be sufficiently manifest as soon as he arrived at the Isle of France, which was on the 22d of September, 1773, when the unmanly and prevaricating conduct of the governor, De Tournay, and the commissary, Maillart, convinced the count that he had no cordial co-operation to expect from them, but rather an inveterate opposition. They went so far as to inform him they were "much surprised that the court had undertaken such an expedition, so prejudicial to the Isle of France, whose merchants would be ruined if the new establishment at Madagascar succeeded; where, by their concurrence, they carried on an advantageous trade which could not be legally prohibited by a simple letter of the minister; but that they would see what could be done until they received the most positive orders from the court:—but that they could not avoid informing the court that the project was impracticable; because the people of Madagascar having, for one hundred and fifty years, repelled all the attempts of France, they would not submit at this moment, when they were united under a solid government, formed by themselves."

The great evil attending the administration of colonies, is the distance at which they lie from the original source of power, and the consequent discretionary power with which their governors must necessarily be invested. Hence arises the mal-administration so frequently witnessed in consequence of the appointment of men of contracted or vicious minds.

Benyowsky felt the full effect of this evil in his own

case. He found that he was left to the resources of his own mind, and foresaw with grief the sufferings and distress both himself and his people would be subject to in their undertaking.

It availed him little that he had obtained the good opinion of the ministry at home: he was now in other hands, who had it in their power, not only to harrass him by withholding the necessary supplies, but also to malign him by false accounts of his conduct, thereby exciting the French government themselves against him. For all this his only remedy was patience and firmness of mind, and these he displayed in an eminent degree. He had gone too far to recede, and therefore resolved, after obtaining what he could of the supplies which had been ordered for him, to sail immediately to Madagascar, leaving the rest to the accidental arrival of ships from Europe, and the favourable but contingent circumstances which might take place in the course of events.

A part of his troop was despatched on the 7th of December, 1773, in the Postillion brig, which had been deputed for the service at Madagascar; but his own stay was protracted, by the conduct of the governor, until the February following, by which means his arrival took place in the rainy season, the period when the fever usually makes its appearance: and, in addition, his enemies in the Isle of France had taken care to transmit such accounts as prejudiced the minds of the Madagascar chiefs against both him and the undertaking; while every species of indignity

and contempt were personally bestowed upon him, in order to lessen him in the eyes of the colonists\* ; in consequence of which, some of the officers appointed to accompany him resigned, and others were chosen, whose character gave him the greatest uneasiness. However, having made up his complement of men, and as much of the necessary supplies as Messrs. Tournay and Maillart were disposed to grant him, he set sail for Madagascar on the 2d of February, 1774, and arrived at the Bay of Antongil, in that island, on the 14th of the same month.

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\* "I learned that some part of my troop were seduced by other regiments, and that some of my volunteers had already deserted ; and that the disadvantageous observations on our expedition had been urged with such malice and success, that part of my officers had pretended sickness, with a view to delay their departure for Madagascar. I understood, likewise, that the chiefs of the Isle of France had sent emissaries to Madagascar, to the king Hyavi, and other chiefs, to warn them that I was come to deprive them of their liberty, and that I had no other intention than to impose the yoke of slavery on the whole island."—*Benyowsky's Memoirs*, Vol. II. p. 111.



## CHAP. XVII.

*State of the Colony on its Arrival—Hostility of the Natives—Conspiracy of the Officers—Distresses of the Colony—Ravages of the Fever—Want of necessary Supplies—Report respecting the Governor's Origin—Invited to act as Mediator—Offers of Service from the Sambarives—War with the Seclaves—Their complete Defeat.*

UPON the count's arrival at Madagascar, he found the shore lined with chiefs, who expressed great satisfaction at seeing him; the detachment which he sent forward, having in some measure dissipated their apprehensions respecting his intentions towards them. The force which he had required was three hundred men\*, with the proper officers and appointments, and two vessels of one hundred and twenty tons burthen: but many of his men were left sick at the Isle of France; and he had the mortification to find, upon his arrival, that those whom he had sent before were in

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\* It is a strong proof of the moderation with which the count proposed to act in his new appointment, that he requested only three hundred men might be sent with him, whereas the French minister proposed *twelve hundred*. His reason was, that the object of the expedition went no farther than to establish posts for commerce, and that so great a number as twelve hundred men, would excite suspicion in the minds of the native chiefs.

a very exhausted state, from the incessant labour they had been obliged to undergo in the construction of houses, and in defending themselves from the hostile attacks of the natives. The first step, therefore, was to make provision for the comfort of the settlers; with this view, he sought the favour of the chiefs by presents, and thus induced them to render their assistance in the building of huts and houses, by which means he was enabled in a few days to land all his men, and lodge them with some degree of comfort in their new habitations. On landing his cargo, he found to his mortification, that the commissary at the Isle of France had omitted to send the principal stores that would have been of service to him, and that no articles of trade were provided, which obliged him to purchase those the captain of the vessel had laid in for his own use, for which the count paid him by a bill on his agent, to the amount of fourteen thousand livres.

His next step was to convene the chiefs, in order to acquaint them with the nature of the establishment, and endeavour to conciliate them by every means in his power. The first of March was the day appointed, when they arrived, twenty-eight in number, accompanied by two thousand armed blacks. After the customary salutations, he acquainted them that the King of France had resolved to form an establishment amongst them, in order to defend them from their enemies, and to open warehouses for the purposes of trade, where they would at all times find

such articles of merchandize as they wanted, which would be furnished to them at a low price, in exchange for the produce of the country, particularly rice, which he recommended them to cultivate largely. He then invited them to enter into a treaty of alliance and friendship, and to grant him sufficient land to fix his establishment, and also some spots of ground in the interior for a similar purpose.

These proposals met the approbation of the chiefs, as far as related to trade, and the grant of the land at the Bay of Antongil, provided no fortresses were to be erected. But as to a settlement in the interior, they requested time to consider of it. They then required an oath, by which he should acknowledge that he had no other power over them, or claim on them, than those of friendship.

The oaths being celebrated and ratified by an entertainment, they drank the king and the governor's health in a cask of brandy, and returned to their villages in high spirits and well satisfied.

Notwithstanding the apparent satisfaction of these chiefs, combinations were forming against the establishment by some of them, which made it necessary for the governor to act with decision and firmness. The most forward in the opposition were Siloulout, and Raoul, the chiefs of a people called the Saphirobac. An attempt was made a short time after the signing of the treaty, to draw the governor and his officers into an ambush; but he was apprised of it, and instead of going to hold a conference, sent a

detachment, who drove them from the wood in which they had concealed themselves. Subsequent attacks of this nature convinced the colonists that they must not expect a continuance of peace. The conduct of the French in their former attempts, had rendered the natives suspicious, and it would require a long process of time to remove those suspicions and establish an entire confidence.

Several short excursions were made by the governor into the interior, with the view of learning the manners and dispositions of the natives. In one of these he discovered a copper mine, on a mountain, at a place called Manambai. It had remained a doubt whether this metal existed in a mineral state on the island, but this circumstance has set the matter at rest.

The colony had hardly been established a month, before a dangerous conspiracy was formed, amongst the officers and privates, against the governor. Their plan was to desert, to the number of sixty, and join the natives, who were hostile, in the destruction of the establishment, and afterwards to return to Europe by a private vessel. This conspiracy was fortunately discovered in time, and by a prudent firmness, the governor brought back the greater part of them to a sense of their duty.

Hyavi, the chief of Foule Point, having been informed of the establishment of the colony, sent to congratulate the governor, and to request him to establish a post for trade in his dominions. The chiefs of St. Mary also waited upon him with a

similar request, offering to do every thing in their power to render it convenient and beneficial.

The governor had shortly after the satisfaction of seeing his enemies, the Saphirobai, come and beg for peace: this was granted, and they took an oath of friendship and alliance with him. Twenty-two great chiefs, and two thousand unarmed blacks, attended on this occasion, and expressed their satisfaction at the treaty.

As far as related to the natives, things were going on well; but the administration suffered from the misconduct of the officers appointed by the government of the Isle of France. One most flagrant instance that came under notice, was that of the store-keeper, who died at the latter end of April, 1775. On examining his accounts, they were found in a most disorderly state, and most of the registers not filled up.

Finding himself now more at liberty, the governor despatched *Sieur Saunier*, commander of the frigate, up the river *Tingballe*, to ascertain the nature of the country. On his return, he reported that the river was navigable ten leagues from its mouth, and that its banks exhibited fine plains in a good state of cultivation; while the hills at the back were covered with large timber, which might be brought down to the settlement, by water, at a trifling expense.

It was an object of consequence to secure the alliance and friendship of the chiefs, and to explore the country, in respect to the facilities of communication, and the establishment of posts for trading with the natives.

For this purpose an interpreter was sent into some of the southern provinces, which were one hundred leagues distant from Louisbourg. A sergeant was also despatched with an interpreter, and one hundred and fifty blacks, with instructions to explore the country across to the western coast, and to make establishments in their march—to enter into treaties with the chiefs of the interior, and convince them of the advantages that would result from a commerce with the whites—to discover the principal branches of trade—to observe their political strength, manners, inclinations, the climate of the country,—and, in short, to neglect nothing that might contribute to the good of the establishment.

The services in which the colonists were obliged to engage, were of such a nature as to reduce them to great distress. The station was surrounded with marshes, which rendered it very unhealthy, and consequently required filling up: the fortifications likewise demanded immediate attention, in order to be prepared against an attack from the natives. These labours of the day, rendered doubly severe by the excessive heat, were succeeded by the military services of the night, and, together, they enervated the men to a great degree. To heighten the distress, they were destitute of all those accommodations necessary in such a situation: not a surgeon on the establishment, with very few medicines in the hospital-chests, or stores in the magazines; and the supplies promised by the governor of the Isle of France, were

withheld. These accumulated evils weakened the colony, and weighed down the health of the governor, so that he was obliged to retire to the Isle D'Aiguillon for change of air.

On his return he found, with regret, that the lieutenant-colonel and fifteen volunteers had died during his absence of a fortnight, and that many more of the troops were ill. This induced him to send a detachment up the river Tingballe, in order to find a situation more healthy to which he might transport the invalids. M. Marigni, who commanded the detachment, after sailing about nine leagues, came to a spot called by the natives the Plain of Health, which appeared suitable for the purpose, being at a distance from the marshes, very extensive, well sheltered, and commanded by a mountain, on which a fort might be constructed: here they built houses, and an hospital for the convalescents. In the meanwhile, the most pressing representations were despatched to the Isle of France, of the distressing case of the colony, accompanied by an order for those things which were necessary; but it appears, the government of that place cared little about the colony at Madagascar, and were pre-determined not to render it any assistance.

During the summer, the governor lost his only son by the fever; and at the same time his Major, De Marigni, died, regretted by every one: he himself had a second attack, which obliged him to repair to the Plain of Health, with thirty invalids.

Notwithstanding the weak state of the settlers, the deficiency of hands, and the continued opposition of the natives, the works went on with considerable activity; so that by September 1775, he had finished all the necessary buildings at Louisbourg, constructed Fort Louis, and made a road twenty-one miles in length, and twenty-four feet in breadth. He had also purchased a considerable portion of land, which was distributed amongst his troops, and preparations were made for cultivating them the following year. In the meantime no supplies having been received either from the Isle of France or Europe, he was in consequence under the necessity of purchasing stores of such vessels as accidentally touched at the island. He discovered that the governor of the former place had secretly sent emissaries to Madagascar, in order to excite an insurrection against the colony; upon which he prevailed upon those chiefs, who were in alliance with him, to keep up an armed force of twelve hundred men to defend the colony in case of an attack.

Having accidentally saved the lives of three children, who, according to the custom of the country, had been devoted to destruction by drowning, he gave directions for summoning a cabar on the occasion, at which he reasoned with the chiefs and their wives on the cruelty of this practice, and at length prevailed on them to engage, by oath, to discontinue the horrid custom. He calls this "the happiest day of his life," and the circumstance reflects great honour on his humanity.



Before the end of the year, the colony had commenced a trade with the Seclaves and other nations. The detachment, which was ordered to find a road across the country to Bombatok, had succeeded only in part, being stopped by the natives of the province of Antanguin, the first village of the Seclaves, who, it appears, were still jealous of their designs. The Saphirobia, whose country lay near the settlement at Louisbourg, were continually endeavouring to excite an insurrection, but the friendly chiefs of St. Mary, Foule Point, and of the Sambarives, warned the governor against them, by which means he counteracted their designs; and in the end, when he found they would not desist, obliged them to leave their province, which was given to the Sambarives.

The colony was still without the expected arrivals from Europe, but by a vessel from the Isle of France, a supercargo, a storekeeper, and several clerks, were added to the establishment. These, however, appear to have been men chosen for no good purpose; for, a very few days after they arrived, the supercargo, Des Assisses, was detected in secretly distributing brandy amongst the chiefs, and endeavouring to prejudice them against the establishment: and, upon the governor being taken ill, he informed the officers of the garrison, that he had particular orders from the intendant at the Isle of France, to take possession of his effects and papers in the event of his death. Every thing connected with the arrival and subsequent conduct of these men, proved that they had

been purposely sent to embarrass and weaken the hands of Benyowsky, and the colony under his care. It required great presence of mind and fortitude to bear up against such discouragements; and had not the governor possessed the confidence of his officers, he could not have enforced the performance of those arduous duties which the welfare of the colony required.

Under these disadvantages, however, he went on steadily with the execution of his projects, omitting nothing that was calculated to promote the welfare of his men, or the civilization of the natives. He shared the dangers, the labours, and the privations of the former; and, by moderation and lenient conduct, abated the enmity of the latter, while the continuance of their friendship was provided for by the establishment of posts for trade. As to the supercargo, when he found he could not otherwise induce him to alter his conduct, he called a council of war, and placed him in confinement; by which step he induced many of the chiefs, who had been the dupes of his calumnies, to render their assistance to the colony. Nor would he release him until he had consented to make a public acknowledgment of the impropriety of his conduct.

The beginning of the year 1775 brought with it intelligence that could not fail to alarm the colony, in its exhausted state. This was no other, than that a combination was forming against it, of the chiefs of the Seclaves, who could at least command forty thou-

sand warriors. The governor, however, concealed his own apprehensions, and caused the public works to be carried on with greater spirit; at the same time he made every exertion to secure the assistance of the chiefs in the vicinity of the colony, and had the satisfaction of receiving offers of service from many of them, particularly the Sambarives, who proposed to send five thousand men, in case he found it necessary to engage in war.

Early in this year a circumstance took place which appears to have given a new turn to the views and feelings of Benyowsky, and to have determined his future plan, in case he was still neglected by the French government, and met with the same ill treatment from that of the Isle of France.

Amongst the people whom he had brought with him from the latter place, was an old negress, named Susanna, who had been sold to the French, and had resided there upwards of fifty years. This woman was a native of Madagascar; and, at the same time that she was enslaved, amongst others who accompanied her to the Isle of France, was a daughter of Ramini Larizon, the Rhoandrian ampansacabe, whose fate we have spoken of before. Susanna fancied, or pretended that she discovered in the governor, a strong resemblance to that unfortunate princess; and, without further investigation, announced to her countrymen that he was actually the son of her sorrowful exile; and that she herself had been commanded by Zanhare, in a dream, to publish the important secret. Whether

this romantic story was invented with the concurrence of the count, that he might thereby gain over to his interest the native chiefs, and render himself independent of the French government, who, indeed, seemed disposed to let the colony sink, is uncertain. Far, however, from attempting to undeceive her, he confirmed the fact, or rather fiction, and told Susanna he had particular reasons for keeping the affair of his birth a secret; but that she was at liberty to acquaint any of her confidential friends with it. From this period there is not a doubt but that he formed a design to establish a regular government in Madagascar, upon liberal principles; and it will be seen in the sequel, that this design was not wholly a visionary one. He appears to have studied the character of the people with great attention; and he saw plainly that such a circumstance as that we have related, would not fail to work upon their sensibilities, and cause them to rally round him if necessary: having, therefore, confirmed the report, he left it for a more favourable opportunity, to take the full advantage it was calculated to afford him.

A war being on the point of breaking out between Hyavi, the chief of Foule Point, and the Betalimenes and Fariavas, the governor was requested by the latter to go and mediate between them. He accordingly set out with two officers and six hundred Sambarive warriors, which number was augmented, before he reached the place of destination, to nearly six thousand. Upon his arrival, he learned that Hyavi

was the aggressor, having forbidden his allies to frequent the market at Foule Point, confiscated their slaves, cattle, and provisions, and ordered a party of his warriors to surprise one of their villages, where they seized several young women, and sold them to the French merchants. Benyowsky immediately invited Hyavi to his camp, where he reproached him for his conduct, and insisted on his compliance with such terms as he thought proper to propose to both parties. Ashamed of his behaviour, Hyavi confessed himself culpable, and acquiesced with the demand of the governor, who instantly ordered a cabar for the following day, to which the chiefs of both parties were invited. Each nation brought a large body of troops, as is usual on such occasions, the number of warriors under arms being not less than twenty-two thousand.

The arbitrator wisely avoided all particular debates, and, without discussion, proposed a general treaty of alliance between the contending powers, upon the most equitable basis. After a conference of three hours, during which he had great difficulty in restraining them from blows, he had the satisfaction to see them agree to his proposals, which were ratified by an oath, and concluded with a festival, at which one hundred and fifty oxen were killed and eaten.

The parties were so well pleased with the impartial conduct of the governor, that in gratitude they each presented him with five hundred oxen, which he caused to be distributed amongst his troops. He also

received from them fifty slaves, to whom he instantly gave freedom, on condition that they should establish themselves near the settlement.

On his return to Louisbourg, he found that a storm was gathering against him amongst some of the nations, particularly the Seclaves and the Saphirobai, which rendered it necessary for him to take every means to strengthen himself against their attempts. On the other hand, the Sambarives came to offer their services, and a cabar was held upon the business, at which were present the officers of the establishment; and Prince Raffangour on the part of the natives. On this occasion the Prince made the following speech :—

“ The nation of the Sambarives, the people of Zanharé, established in the provinces of Mananhar and Massoualla, have seen with grief, that the colony of Louisbourg has entered into treaties of friendship and alliance with other nations, in preference, and to the exclusion of theirs ; and that, at the present moment, all those nations have united together against their benefactors, and have even invited our people to join with them against the white men. But as the Sambarives have always walked in the paths of justice, our nation has refused their offers, preferring the friendship of the chief of the white men to every inducement of relationship or alliance which might exist between ourselves and his enemies. In consequence of this, the Sambarive nation offers to assist the colony with five thousand men, to be employed against its enemies ; and hopes, that

by this action, it will render itself worthy of an alliance, the value of which it is well convinced of."

The governor, in reply, remarked that he had always been desirous of an alliance with the Sambarives, but that the remoteness of their province had not hitherto permitted him to treat with them directly; that the offer of supplies inspired him with a high opinion of their sentiments; and he should accept this mark of friendship with the greatest pleasure, as it would justify the unbounded confidence he was determined to place in the Sambarive nation, respectable for the blood of Ramini.

A few days after, the enemy made their appearance to the number of about three thousand, and demanded a private conference. Not to seem intimidated, the governor went with only an interpreter to their camp. They then declared their grievances, which appear to have been principally occasioned by their own acts. He replied very calmly to their complaints, and gave them firmly to understand that no alteration could be made to meet any of their wishes, the object of which was to demolish the different posts he had established.

They were much surprised at the boldness of his speech; but some of the chiefs cried out, "We shall never have a better opportunity than now that we have him in our power," and instantly surrounded him on all sides. At this juncture, one of his officers, at the head of fifty blacks, came to his assistance. While these were engaged with one party of the enemy, another went

to attack the fort, but were vigourously repulsed, and thrown into confusion. This gave the governor an opportunity to escape: two chiefs attempted to stop him, but being a good swordsman, he parried their strokes, upon which they cried out, "he is a sorcerer—we are undone!" and immediately fled. The garrison, having been alarmed by this time, came to the combat, and soon made the enemy retreat. On this occasion they forbore to make use of the cannon at the fort, that no clamour might be raised against the colony, and they soon felt the benefit of such a line of conduct; for several of the neighbouring nations, when they heard of the moderation that was displayed, espoused their cause.

A more formidable body of the enemy soon made their appearance, and pitched their camp between the chief settlement and the Plain of Health, in order to cut off the communication. The governor, therefore, determined to attack them immediately with all his forces, which consisted of six thousand natives, and his own troops, leaving a sufficient number to guard the fort. The difficulties of this campaign were very great, on account of the mountainous and marshy nature of the country through which they had to pass, drawing the cannon after them.

They came up with the enemy on a beautiful plain called Mahertomp, on the banks of the Tingballe, where they had strongly intrenched themselves in their camps. The governor sent an officer with a detachment, to attack them in the rear, while the main body



of the troops did the same in front. But there was no occasion for this simultaneous attack ; for the officer with the detachment having performed his part prematurely, the first discharge of the cannon struck the enemy with a panic, and they immediately left their camps and fled into the woods, leaving about two hundred muskets, and forty prisoners behind them. The governor, with his accustomed forbearance, immediately dismissed the latter with offers of peace, which were however refused.

On the plain of Mahertomp, he established a post. It is a beautiful track of country, lying in the province of Antimaroa, of which it is the richest part, and occupies about six leagues of the banks of the Tingballe, and stretching thirteen leagues across from north-east to south-west. It is well cultivated, and inhabited throughout. Here, therefore, the army raised a redoubt, which was defended with four pieces of cannon, and an officer and twelve men.

The enemy having incamped at a short distance from the Plain of Health, the governor instantly followed them, and found them strongly intrenched to the number of eight thousand. He immediately sent for four pieces of artillery to replace those which were left at the new station ; but in the meanwhile his allies, desirous of proving their valour, had attacked the enemy unknown to him, and being repulsed, were driven to the foot of the hill on which stood Fort Augustus, in the plain.

As soon as the cannon arrived, the governor,

without informing his allies, marched in the night with thirty volunteers, and two hundred disciplined natives in the pay of the settlement, and having erected two batteries, opened a brisk fire upon the enemy's camp. The palisade was destroyed in half an hour, upon which they abandoned their intrenchments, and hastened in confusion to the woods. By this time his allies, hearing of the engagement, marched to the spot, and finding the camp taken, passed the river Ranoumera, and drove the enemy away without resistance. \* This victory was achieved with no other loss than eleven natives killed, and two volunteers wounded. Sixty-five of the enemy were left dead on the field of battle.

A second division of the enemy had pitched their tents on an island of six leagues circumference, situated in the morass of Ampangou. The governor, therefore, marched to the plain of Mahertomp, which was at a short distance from them. Having discovered the passage to the island, he reconnoitred their situation, and finding it strongly defended by nature, he determined to blockade them, and prevent their receiving any supplies. In about a fortnight's time, their provisions were expended, and the majority were desirous of treating for peace; upon which several boats, loaded with rice and bananas, were sent to them, and they were informed, that so far from wishing to exterminate them, the French would allow them a clear passage to retreat, if they would lay down their arms. This induced numbers of them to

retire, and many came to the French camp, who were kindly received, and supplied with provisions.

Although reduced to a small number, the remainder of the enemy held out a fortnight longer, in expectation of being joined by a body of Seclaves ; whereupon the governor determined to attack them, which was done, and without causing any great destruction of human life, they were completely dispersed.

The war being thus terminated, and the province of Antimaroa \* being, by the expulsion of the Saphirobai, uninhabited and uncultivated, proposals were made to the Sambarives to take possession of it. This was readily acceded to, and a cabar was held for the division of the conquered lands. The lands on the right branch of the river Tingballe were given to the Sambarives, and those on the left were kept for the establishment. Hearing that the Saphirobai were wandering in the woods, and subsisting upon roots, because the chiefs of the other provinces would not receive them, commissioners were sent to the allies, intreating them to admit, and assist them with provisions, provided they renounced their designs against the establishment. This had the desired effect.

The allies were now sent home to their different

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\* Antimaroa is a small province or district within that of Manghabei, situated at the northern extremity of the Bay of Antongil. We ought to have remarked before, that, besides the provinces enumerated in the second chapter of this work, there are many smaller ones, *within the former*, and subject to the same princes, but internally governed by their own chiefs.

districts, and, having distributed presents amongst them according to the custom of the country, the governor had the satisfaction of seeing them return perfectly contented with the treatment they had experienced from him.

The fatigues which the governor had undergone in the late campaign, added to his anxiety of mind, occasioned by the malevolent and harrassing conduct of the government of the Isle of France, preyed upon his health, and at length reduced him to such a state of weakness, as obliged him to place the command in the hands of Captain Malendre, with full directions how to act in case of his death. He also obtained written testimonials of an entire approbation of his conduct during the whole time he held the command.

This document, which is recorded in his memoirs, is highly honourable to his character, and remains an unanswerable argument against the calumnies which certain French writers have heaped upon his memory.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*Difficulties of the Colony—Supplied with Clothes and other Necessaries—Combination of the Chiefs of the Seclaves—Preparations for the War—Account of the Campaign—Defeat of the Seclaves—Arrival of Despatches from Europe—The Governor returns to Louisbourg—Proposals of Peace from the Seclaves—Benyowsky invited to take the Title of Ampansacabe—Proceedings in consequence—Arrival of the Commissioners to inspect the Colony—Benyowsky resigns—National Assembly to elect him Ampansacabe—Proceedings—Establishes a Constitution and Government—Sets sail for Europe.*

**DURING** Benyowsky's seclusion from business, he had full time to reflect on the critical state of the colony. He had a short time previous to his illness, received a positive refusal of supplies from the Isle of France, and he was therefore left to those which the accidental arrival of private vessels might afford. It was now the latter end of September ; consequently the bad season would soon commence, for which his troops were but ill provided, being almost destitute of shoes and clothing, while there was every reason to expect a fresh combination of the natives against them. These circumstances were so trying that they could with difficulty bear up under them.

In order to supply the deficiency of clothing, the governor collected a number of the native women, whom he caused to be instructed in the weaving of cloth, which succeeded admirably, and ten of the volunteers were appointed to make these cloths into dresses for the rest. He also made a successful attempt at tanning leather; and as skins were to be had in great plenty, and there were several shoemakers in the garrison, these wants were soon supplied.

Some private vessels had arrived, by whom the colony was furnished with necessaries in exchange for rice, of which they had abundance. It appeared also that a small corvette had been sent from France, with workmen, and some supplies for Madagascar: unfortunately this vessel was wrecked before she reached her destination, and nothing was saved; so that at the end of two years, instead of having every want provided for by the government, the colony had absolutely received no assistance whatever from a public source, and the governor was under the necessity either of paying for those he could obtain, out of his own private funds, or of taking them in exchange for produce, at the pleasure of the owners.

Towards the year 1775, intelligence arrived, that another powerful combination was forming against the colony by the chiefs of the Seclaves, who were endeavouring to excite against it the eastern nations; upon which spies were sent to ascertain the truth and the extent of the confederacy. The

return of the spies brought a confirmation of the warlike preparations of that people, with this alleviation,—that they waited for the expiration of the bad season before they commenced the attack; but they expected to muster thirty thousand men, and were making every exertion to gain other chiefs to the confederacy.

This information rendered it necessary for the governor to send emissaries to the north and south, to acquaint his allies of their intentions, and to engage them to be in readiness against the period fixed for the campaign. In consequence of this requisition, he received assurances of support from the chiefs of no less than twelve different provinces, amongst whom was Lambouin, king of the North, and Hyavi, king of Foule Point. They all engaged to take the field upon the first summons, with all the troops they could muster.

The preparations for this campaign, which appeared likely to decide the contest between the colony and the Seclaves, occupied the time of the former from the latter end of the year to the following April. The immense force which was to be engaged, with the bold and warlike character of the enemy against whom they were going to combat, rendered this a very formidable affair; and it was necessary for the governor, on whom the whole responsibility rested, to act with prudence and caution. Before, therefore, he finally concluded to take the field, he convened his officers in a council of war, in order to take their

opinions as to the propriety of such a step. On this occasion, after representing the numerous difficulties under which they laboured in consequence of not receiving supplies, and their inferiority in point of numbers to the enemy, he on the other hand pointed out the dangers which would arise from shewing any signs of fear or timidity. They had hitherto maintained their character for bravery and military prowess, and had thereby gained the alliance of one third of the islanders ; and the surest way to preserve their respect, was to shew that they in no way feared the enemy, but were ready in their turn to become the assailants, and attack them on their frontier ; whereas to purchase a peace would debase them in the eyes of their allies, and of all the nations on the island, who would despise them when they saw them embarrassed, and undecided in their proceedings. He therefore left it to them to decide the question of peace or war, declaring, at the same time, he saw no alternative but of instantly taking the field and carrying the war to the frontier of the Seclaves, by which means they would preserve their own possessions, and those of their allies, from devastation, and, by surprising the enemy, compel them to submit to such terms as they should subscribe.

This plan was approved of by all the officers, who assured him, that though their number was small, and even that must be reduced by the necessary guards for the posts, yet they would not shrink from the danger, but desired nothing more earnestly than to



receive his orders, which would give them an opportunity of performing their duty in a manner worthy of themselves.

The question having been thus decided, preparations were instantly made for taking the field. A number of Mosambique slaves had been taught to work the field pieces ; to each piece, therefore, were appointed a cannoneer, a workman, and four Mosambiques ; the volunteers were excellent marksmen, having been much practised in shooting at a target. The number of troops belonging to the establishment, was about three hundred, and the native allies amounted to three thousand eight hundred, upon first setting out. These were divided into three companies for the convenience of foraging ; and, upon their march, each company received reinforcements to the number altogether of twelve thousand, so that the whole force with which they took the field, was sixteen thousand three hundred and thirteen men, after having left a strong guard at each of the posts.

Hirbay was the place of rendezvous : this place is to the north of Louisbourg. Every arrangement having been made for so formidable an undertaking, the governor set sail with his little squadron, consisting of one hundred and ninety-three piroguas, on the 30th of April, 1776, and having landed at Hirbay, was presently joined by his allies. A party was sent forward to clear a passage for the army across the mountains. These soon fell in with a body of the enemy, who retired upon their approach. It was a

matter of no small difficulty to pass the mountains with such an army, and to draw heavy cannon after them. Some of these mountains are so steep, that it requires the use of cords to climb them. As soon as the army had passed, they were joined by another body of four thousand men. After resting two days, they entered a wood which extended eighteen miles from east to west; and immediately upon reaching the opposite side of it, they discovered three camps of the Seclaves on a large plain. Judging it prudent not to shew themselves in force till they had refreshed themselves awhile, they withdrew again into the wood. The next morning, having established a rear-guard for the protection of their camp equipage, they marched directly to the first camp of the enemy, which they reached within cannon-shot by sun-rise. The Seclaves, upon their approach, arranged themselves in several divisions at the head of their camp, and began firing. But the governor having ordered his artillery to be brought forward, twenty shot from them put the whole army to flight, and caused them to abandon their first camp, and at the same time the second camp was taken by another division of the combined army. Perceiving these two camps destroyed, the enemy quitted the third of themselves, which was soon consumed. Eighty Seclaves were killed, and fifty wounded in this engagement, while on the other side none of the whites were hurt, and only a few of the natives wounded. The possession of artillery gave the latter such a decided advantage,

that their opponents could do nothing against them. Permission was given to the allies to pursue them, which they did, and entered their province, where they committed such ravages, that several bodies of the Seclaves came to the governor's camp to intreat forgiveness, and to request him to put a stop to the devastation. He accordingly despatched his aid-de-camp to Antanguin, to restrain the allied chiefs ; and the same day he marched thither himself. This village contains five hundred houses, and is well palisaded and defended by a ditch. At the extremity of the town, the allies had pitched their camp, and he learned from them that the Seclaves had fled as far as the western coast, reporting as they went, that they had been conquered by demons, who vomited flames upon their armies. The chief of Antanguin came to the camp with his head and beard shaved, in token of submission, to intreat forgiveness for having joined the Seclaves. He acknowledged himself conquered, and his province confiscated, but begged to be allowed to retain it on condition of paying an annual tribute. He informed the governor that the king of the Seclaves was completely sick of the war, and had sent envoys to Hyavi, to request him to intercede and procure him peace at any rate.

The governor continued in this place several days, during which he and his officers were employed in taking surveys of the country, which they found to be very rich in pasture, and herds of cattle. Envoys arrived from the Seclaves, demanding peace,

but he told them they ought to sue for pardon rather than peace, and he should continue in their province to give them time to come to a determination.

While the army remained here, which was protracted till June, the long expected despatches arrived from France, after a delay of two and a half years. By the first letters the governor opened, he had the satisfaction of learning, that the *Sirenne* had been sent with ammunition, provisions, and money, for the purposes of trade, and that larger supplies might be expected at the end of the year. He now began to hope, that the distresses and privations of the colony were at an end, and that he should soon be in a capacity to pursue his plans for its establishment on a solid footing. But what were his feelings, when, on opening subsequent despatches, he found that the *Sirenne* had been wrecked to the south of Fort Dauphin, and every thing was lost! while on the other hand, a private letter from the French minister, informed him that he must confine his operations to the "preservation of the posts already established, as his Majesty had not fully determined to have a colony at Madagascar." Confounded at this intelligence, he instantly called a council of his officers, to consult with them as to the steps necessary to be taken.

After a long consultation, they were unanimously of opinion, that it was expedient instantly to suspend the military operations against the Seclaves, and re-

turn to Louisbourg, there to wait the further orders of his Majesty's government.

This determination alarmed the native chiefs, who were afraid of the resentment of the Seclaves. One of them, named Rozai, had had his wife and children taken prisoners by the enemy, who had ravaged the district where they resided; and he was apprehensive that when the Seclaves found the French could no longer prosecute the war, they would further revenge themselves by selling his family. But Benyowsky promised to send instantly and reclaim them; and if the Seclaves refused to give them up, or should ill treat them, he would send a body of troops to enforce it. This promise satisfied him.

Having deputed the command of the troops to his aid-de-camp De Malendre, the governor set out on his return to Louisbourg, and arrived on the 12th of June, where he was employed for some time in preparing despatches for the minister, and in the celebration of festivals, on account of the victory over the Seclaves. A few days after, the squadron of piroguas, with the army, entered the harbour amidst shouts of joy. He learned by De Malendre, that the king of the Seclaves had sent envoys to propose a treaty of peace, which he had referred to the decision of the governor.

The assistance of the chiefs being no longer necessary, it was expected that they would depart, but they all refused to leave the settlement, giving as a reason, that Hyavi had received a letter from the Isle

of France, stating that the governor would very soon be displaced, and sent to Europe to take his trial; in consequence of which they had come to a determination to resist such a design by force if necessary. The governor represented that the residence of so many troops on the spot, tended to impoverish the country, and if *they* were determined to reside near him, it would be expedient to send the troops away to their several provinces, as they would always have time to re-assemble them. In answer to this, they begged him not to urge their departure any further, being determined rather to perish than quit him.

The colony being now in a state of tranquillity, the lands in the vicinity of Louisbourg were allotted to those individuals, both amongst the garrison and the natives, who, by their good conduct, had merited it. These lands were of a very productive quality, and would have amply repaid the settlers, had they remained to reap the benefit of their labours. Several bodies of the Seclaves also came and requested permission to settle on the territory of the colony, promising to be subject to its regulations. They were accordingly disposed of on the banks of the Tingballe.

A few weeks after the return of the army, the envoys of the king of the Seclaves arrived, bringing with them the family of Prince Rozai, as a proof of their sincerity in wishing for peace. They likewise presented the governor with three hundred oxen and sixty slaves, in the name of their nation, and required

of him an oath not to make war upon them in future. He replied he was ready to enter into such an engagement, provided their king did the same : he also required that he should allow the French to trade with his subjects, and build store-houses. These conditions the envoys were not prepared with instructions to accede to ; but having received presents they departed, promising to use their influence with their king to persuade him to a compliance.

The report that Benyowsky was descended from the race of Ramini was by no means forgotten by the natives. It had, on the contrary, obtained considerable influence over their minds ; and, as soon as it was known that he was to be recalled, the chiefs came to a determination to employ every means to prevent his return to Europe. The first intimation he received of their design was from four chiefs, named Raoul, Manding, Raffangour, and Ramaraombe, each of whom reigned over powerful provinces. These men demanded an audience, as deputies from their several nations. This being granted, they presented themselves at the fort, followed by two columns, consisting of twelve thousand armed troops, with drums beating and colours flying. They drew up before the governor's house, and the troops having grounded their arms, the deputies advanced to the hall, where the governor and his officers were ready to receive them. After the usual salutations, three of them seated themselves, but Raffangour remained standing, and delivered a speech as follows :—

“ Blessed be the day which brought thee into the world—Blessed be thy parents who have taken care of thy infancy—And blessed be the hour in which thou didst set thy foot upon our island !—The Malagos chiefs and captains, whose hearts thou hast gained, who love thee, and are faithfully attached to thee, have received information that the French king intends to appoint another in thy place, and that he is angry with thee because thou hast refused to deliver us to his slavery : they have therefore met, and have held cabars, to decide upon the manner in which they should act if this should prove true. Their love, and their attachment for thee, have obliged me, in this circumstance, to reveal to thee the secret of thy birth, and thy rights over this immense country, all whose people adore thee. Yes ! I myself,—Raffangour, reputed the sole survivor of the family of Ramini,—I have renounced this sacred right, to declare thee the only true inheritor of Ramini. The Spirit of God, which reigns over our cabars, caused all the chiefs and captains to make oath that they would acknowledge thee their amphansacabe ; that they would no more quit thee, but preserve thy person at the price of their lives, against all the violence of the French.”

At the conclusion of this speech, Raoul rose and delivered his message as follows :—

“ I, Raoul, chief of the Saphirobai, sent to thee by the chiefs and captains of several united nations, demand that thou wilt grant to-morrow a public cabar, that we may render thee homage of our fidelity and



obedience. I am likewise charged to request that thou wilt not display the white flag, but the blue, in sign that thou heartily acceptest our submission."

"The chiefs and captains assembled in cabar, have likewise commissioned me to request, that thou wilt keep the officers and soldiers at a distance from the place in which this cabar shall be held; and that in the mean time, thou wilt keep as a guard the twelve hundred warriors, which the nation will constantly maintain around thee."

The two speakers then seated themselves in expectation of an answer. Benyowsky assured them that he would attend the cabar with pleasure, and there declare his sentiments in public. That they might depend on his friendship, his zeal for their interests, and his readiness to sacrifice his own welfare for the good of the nation.

After the cabar was broken up, he questioned his officers respecting this affair; and, while conversing with them, three, who were absent, came up, at the head of fifty men, and declared their determination to give up their lives rather than see him quit the island. That having themselves intermarried with the natives, they should fix their abode there; and therefore were ready to relinquish their engagements with the French government, and attach themselves to his cause.

The governor endeavoured to dissuade them from this resolution, but in vain. They assured him that the infamous conduct of the French government at

the Isle of France, as well as the neglect of the minister, convinced them that they were more than regardless of their welfare; that they were not alone in their determination, for he would not find ten men, either officers or private soldiers, who would quit the island. He therefore desisted from any further argument on the subject.

The following day being appointed for holding the cabar, it was ushered in with a salute of twenty-one guns from the fort; and, the French standard having been taken down, a blue flag was hoisted according to the wish of the chiefs. At seven o'clock a detachment of seven hundred blacks arrived, and formed a square about the hall. Next came sixty-two chiefs, with their troops, and having saluted the governor, seated themselves in cabar. The most ancient of them, named Manonganon, immediately rose, and spoke as follows:—

“ We, the princes and chiefs, who are assembled as representatives of the whole nation, being determined by the rights of thy birth, by thy wisdom, and by thy affection for us, do declare at this instant, that we acknowledge thee our ampanasacabe; and intreat thee to accept this rank and title, with the assurance of finding fidelity, affection, and constancy in our hearts:—Answer us.”

The governor rose and replied, that he accepted their offer; and that it should be his endeavour to establish a government on a solid foundation, and to promote the happiness of the people, by intro-

ducing the arts of civilization and a system of just laws; while the advantages of commerce, and an effectual cultivation of the lands, would occupy his first attention, and would abundantly flourish under their united endeavours.

At the close of this speech, the whole of the troops began firing a *feu-de-joie*: after which, Sancé, chief of the Sambarives, rose, and declared that his nation required the governor to quit the service of France, and to cause all those of his troops to do the same, who were desirous of residing in Madagascar. He then called upon him to point out the province in which he would choose to reside, that they might build him a town.

Benyowsky replied, that it was his intention to quit the service of France, but that it was necessary for him to wait the arrival of the commissioners from his Majesty, whom he shortly expected; for which reason he begged that the oath might be deferred, he not being master of his own actions while bound by his former engagements.

Raffangour ended the cabar by proposing that an oath should be mutually entered into by Benyowsky and the chiefs alone, with the understanding, that it should be publicly repeated, as soon as he had quitted the service of France. This was immediately done, and, to render it more sacred, confirmed by the oath of blood, which is performed by opening the skin of the left breast with a razor, when each of those present sucks a drop of the new

chief's blood, while maledictions and imprecations are pronounced against him who shall fail in his engagement.

When the cabar broke up, the native troops, who had been prepared for the part they were to take in the ceremony, lowered their muskets and their colours, and laid their left hands upon their breasts in token of engagement to the new ampansacabe. The affair ended, as usual, with feasting; twenty bullocks were killed, and, with twelve casks of brandy, distributed amongst the natives, of whom nearly eleven thousand were present. The colonists shared in the festival, having mounted blue ribbons over their white cockades.

The chiefs now began to return home, having agreed to reassemble as soon as they perceived the beacon fired at Manghabei. Three thousand native troops were left at his command, with Sancé at their head, and six of the chiefs were detained at the fort as counsellors.

In the month of September, intelligence was received that the *Consolante* had touched at the Isle of France, having on board Messrs. Belcombe and Chevereaux, who were proceeding without delay to Madagascar, in quality of commissioners, to investigate the affairs of the settlement; and a private letter from a friend assured him that these inspectors had orders to carry him to Europe, provided such a step would not endanger the colony. This information was verified on the 21st of the same month, when the *Consolante* made its appearance, and cast anchor off the island of Aiguillon. A

letter was instantly despatched to the governor from the commissioners, acquainting him with the nature of their instructions, and accompanied with an order in the king's name, for him to repair on board. In reply, he observed he was ready to put the command of the settlement into their hands, conformably to his Majesty's order; but that until he had resigned his office, he could not think of leaving the settlement. He also sent a private letter to Mr. Belcombe, requesting him to land without his troops, giving his word of honour that he would comply with every request consistent with reason. Mr. Belcombe replied, that he would depend upon his honour as a military man, and come on shore; though, had he thought proper to credit all he had heard, he should not trust himself.

Having landed the following day, these gentlemen entered upon their office as inspectors, and presented him with a paper, containing twenty-five questions relative to the settlement. They then examined the fort, public buildings, and the accounts, as well as the several officers of the establishment; after which they proceeded to the two forts, St. John and Augustus, on the Tingballe. On the 26th of September they held a cabar with the chiefs, at which Benyowsky declined being present, that the natives might have an opportunity of speaking their sentiments.\* Lastly,

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\* By some mistake, the transactions which took place at this cabar, and which must have been highly interesting, were omitted to be inserted in the count's memoirs, although referred to therein as being included in the Appendix.

they gave the count a discharge respecting his *past conduct* and the accounts, and a certificate for the sum of four hundred and fifty thousand livres, which he had advanced to the treasury. On the twenty-ninth they retired on board their vessel, from whence they sent him an order to confine his operations to the preservation of the chief settlement, until he had received further instructions ; to put a stop to all public works, and to continue the prohibition of trading with the blacks. These orders were accompanied with a permission for the count to absent himself from Madagascar ; but having previously given in his resignation, and surrendered the command of the troops to M. de Sanglier, he refused to receive these orders, and sent them to that officer, declaring to the inspectors that he had in future nothing to do with the establishment, any further than as he was disposed to promote their interests with the natives. The commissioners answered, they could not accept his resignation, and therefore he was bound to hold his office until the arrival of specific orders from his Majesty, which would be issued on their report.

As soon as the Consolante had sailed, the Rhoardrian and Voadziri chiefs came to Louisbourg, and having learned that the count had quitted the service of France, they required the fulfilment of his promise. Accordingly, the 12th of October, 1776, was appointed for a national meeting to administer the oath of amfansacabe. In the interval, a most pressing application was made by the officers and soldiers of the

garrison, to induce him to resume the command ; the latter declaring that if he did not, they would leave the fort and assert their independence.

M. de Sanglier urging the same request, he at length consented ; at the same time protesting that such a resumption should not be considered as a renewal of his obligations to the French government, which he had entirely renounced. Deeming it expedient that the opinion of the chiefs should be known by the minister, as to whether they were desirous of the continuance or reduction of the establishment on the island, a cabar was held, at which the chiefs of ten of the most powerful nations attended, and delivered their sentiments as follows:—

“ Wise and prudent as thou art, canst thou doubt our attachment to thee?—Hast thou not seen with what ardour we have fought against our brothers, when they had rebelled, in order to bring them to a sense of their duty?—Whence, therefore, is it, that thou shewest so much distrust towards a people who are attached to thee? If thy heart tells thee that thou wishest well to the French, say,—and write to their king that we offer him our hearts and our friendship. But we wish to live under thy command—thou art our father and our Lord ;—let the French love thee as we do, and our arms shall be united to theirs ; our colours shall be united to those of white men, and we will fight valiantly against the common enemy : but if thou must suffer the hatred of the French, we will not acknowledge them as brethren,

and *their enemies shall be our friends*. These are our thoughts, and the words of our hearts ; promise therefore before that God whom we all adore, to convey them to the king of the French, and engage that thou wilt be more attached to us than to the French nation, and wilt never desert us."

The count having promised to communicate their sentiments to the French government, they engaged to live in good harmony with the establishment.

A day or two after, several deputed chiefs, with a considerable armed force, arrived at the fort. They informed the governor that the *great day* of the oath approached, and that the chiefs and people in assembly requested his presence, and had sent a detachment of troops for his safeguard and service.

In conformity with their desires, he assumed the Indian dress, and set out amidst the shouts of the natives, followed by the whole of the garrison. On his arrival at the camp, which was at a considerable distance from the settlement, he was received in due form by all the chiefs, and conducted to a tent which had been prepared for him. Six domestics and a guard of two hundred men were appointed for his attendants.

On the twelfth of October, he was awakened by the discharge of cannon ; and the chief, Raffangour, with six others, dressed in white, came to his tent, from whence they conducted him to a plain on which the natives, to the number of thirty thousand, were assembled. These had formed themselves into an



immense circle, each nation being by itself, with its chief attached to it, and the women on the outside of the circle. As soon as he entered the circle, the chiefs formed a smaller one round him, and silence being proclaimed, Raffangour harangued the assembly in the following words :—

“Blessed be Zanhare, who has returned to his people. Blessed be the blood of Zafe Ramini, to whom our affection is due. Blessed be the law of our fathers, which commands us to obey a chief descended from the blood of Ramini. Our fathers, and ourselves, have experienced that disunion is the punishment of God. During the long period since we have been deprived of a chief of the sacred race of Ramini, we have lived like wild beasts ; sometimes killing our brethren, and at others, perishing by their violence. Enfeebled by these evils, the weakest have always been the prey of the strongest. We have been wicked, and have not been desirous of listening to the voice of justice and equity. But we have in our own times beheld the wretched descendants of those who spilled the blood of Ramini, call in the aid of the French to assist them in oppressing and destroying their brethren. We know how Zanhare has punished them, by permitting one of their slaves, supported by the French\*, to spill their blood, in expiation of their crimes. You all understand me ; but I have thought proper to bring these facts to

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\* See Note, p. 50.

your recollection, that you might in future adopt union of heart for your law. To preserve this, you must follow the law of your fathers, which commands you to submit to the descendant of Ramini. I here present him to you ; I give him this assagaye, that he may be the only Ombiassobe as was our father Ramini :” (then elevating his voice), “ Attend to my voice, ye Rhoandrians, Anacandrians, Ontzatsi, Voadziri, Lohavohitz, Ontzoa, Ondeves, Philoubeis, Ombiasses, Ampouria.—It is the law of our fathers. Acknowledge the ampansacabe—submit to him—listen to his voice—follow the laws which he shall establish, and you shall be happy. Alas ! my old age does not permit me to hope that I shall long share your happiness, my friends ; but my spirit shall perceive the testimonies of that gratitude which you may shew to my tomb.”—Then turning to the count, he proceeded, “ And thou, son of the blood of Ramini, implore the assistance of God, who enlightens thee with his spirit. Be just—love thy people as thy children—let their happiness be thine—be not a stranger to their wants, their misfortunes—govern and assist with thy counsels, the Rhoandrians and Anacandrians—protect the Ontzatsi and Voadziri—watch with paternal care over the Lohavohitz, Ontzoa, and Philoubeis—employ for thy general good, the Ondeves, the Ombiasses, and do not despise the Ampouria—cause the latter to consider their masters as their fathers, as it was in the days of our father Ramini.”

Having finished this discourse, he put the assagaye into the hands of the count, and prostrated himself before him. All the chiefs followed his example, and afterwards the whole multitude, so that the new ampansacabe saw, with perfect astonishment, fifty thousand people prostrated before him. Raffangour then dictated to him the following answer:—

“ Long live the blood of Ramini—long live the Madagascar nation—long live the Rhoandrians, Anacandrians, Ontzatsi, Voadziri, Lohavohitz, Ontzoa, Philoubei, Ondeves, Ombiasses, and Ampouria—long live the blood of our fathers—and may the God who created the heavens and the earth, long preserve us all !”—The people, who were still prostrate, gave a shout as each class was named, and at the last arose. The several classes then separated from each other, and, forming a circle, stood apart, when the count was led first to the Rhoandrians, near whom there stood an ox, whose throat he cut, at the same time pronouncing the oath of sacrifice; and every Rhoandrian took a small portion of the blood, which he swallowed, repeating, with a loud voice, imprecations against himself and his children, in case he or they should break the oath. He was then conducted to the circle of Anacandrians, where he killed two oxen, the same oath being repeated, and the same imprecations pronounced. In this manner he passed through each of the several classes of the people, killing three oxen for the Voadziri, four for the Lohavohitz, six for the On-

deves, two for the Ombiasses, and twelve for the Ampouria. These last dipped the ends of their assagayes in the blood, and licked them as they pronounced the oath.

After this part of the ceremony had been gone through, he was again conducted to the circle of Rhoandrians to perform the oath of blood. This is done by each person making an incision with a razor under the left breast, and the count having done the same, they sucked the blood of each other, at the same time pronouncing the most horrible maledictions against whoever should violate his oath, and blessings in favour of those who should continue faithful to their engagements. These ceremonies occupied about two hours, and at the close of them, the chiefs commanded silence, in order to afford a moment of recollection wherein to invoke to the spirit of Zanharé, and to thank him for his goodness and protection. The assembly then broke up, and the day was spent in rejoicing and festivity, which were kept up to a late hour.

In the evening of the same day, three hundred women came to make an oath to Madame Benyowsky. This was performed by moonlight, and purported that they would obey her orders, and appeal to her in all disputes and quarrels in which it was improper for men to interfere.

The following day the new amphansacabe held his first cabar, at which the chiefs executed an act of engagement, which was drawn up in the Madegasse

language, and in Roman letters. It ran as follows:—

“This act of oath of the kings Rhoandrians, of the Princes Anacandrians and Voadziri, of the chiefs Lohavohitz, and of the people of Madagascar, made the twelfth day of October, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-six, appointing and confirming the election of Maurice Augustus Count De Benyowsky, the rank of Ampansacabe, or Supreme Chief of the Nation, is acknowledged by us the kings, princes, chiefs, and people of Madagascar undersigned, being assembled in cabar.”

‘This was signed by a number of great chiefs. It ran on thus:—

“In presence of our people, having consumed the sacrifice, and made the oath of blood, we proclaim and acknowledge Maurice Augustus for our supreme chief Ampansacabe, titles extinct since the death of our holy family of Ramini, which we revive in him and his family. We, therefore, submit inviolably to his authority; in consequence of which, we determine to erect in our province of Mahavelou, a monument to perpetuate the memory of our re-union, and to immortalize our holy oath. In order that our posterity to the remotest ages may be obedient to the sacred family, Ombiassi of the Ampansacabe, whom we all sanctify by our submission; cursed be our children who shall not obey our present will—cursed be their inheritances, and the fruits of the earth on

which they shall subsist : may the most horrid slavery confound them !”

This oath, having been read aloud three times, was signed in the name of the whole nation, by

HYAVI, *King of the East.*

LAMBOUIN, *King of the North.*

RAFFANGOUR RHOANDRIAN, *of the Sambarives.*

The troops attached to the establishment, were by no means indifferent spectators of these extraordinary transactions. At the conclusion of them, a petition, signed by thirty-eight soldiers, five subaltern officers, three officers, and six gentlemen in the civil department, was presented to the count, intreating his protection, which was granted.

..The next step which was taken, sets the character of the count in a favourable point of light, as it respects his designs upon Madagascar. It was no less than the proposal of a form of government, and a constitution on a liberal and enlightened basis, well calculated to promote the happiness, and to meet the exigencies of a people just emerging from the savage state. The form of government he proposed was as follows :—

1. A Supreme Council—this was to consist of thirty-two persons chosen from the Rhoandrians and Anacandrians. This council was to “exercise all

acts of sovereignty, and to possess the sole right, with the consent of the Ampansacabe, of convening the general assembly of the nation;—to watch lest foreign armies should make attempts against the liberty of the Madagascar nation, by forming establishments on the shore—to render industry and trade flourishing—and, in short, to use their utmost exertions to secure the perfect prosperity of the community.

2. A Permanent Council, for the purpose of superintending the execution of the orders of the supreme council. This was to be composed of eighteen persons, two of whom were Rhoandrians, and the rest Voadziri and Lohavohitz.

3. Provincial Governors;—these were to be chosen out of the first class.

4. Provincial Councils;—these were to be composed of a Rhoandrian governor, five Anacandrians, two Voadziri, four Lohavohitz, and the remainder Ontzatsi and Ombiasses.

This form of government was proposed by the count in a full cabar. It appears he had not a little difficulty to make the chiefs comprehend the nature of so complicated an affair: however, as soon as they understood it, they heartily approved of it, and it was immediately adopted, and the various members were appointed.

The first act of the new council was to determine upon a spot for the erection of a town; and after

some discussion, it was agreed that it should be at the head of the river Manongauzon. They likewise proposed to erect six governments, from the harbour of Moroava, to the Itapere rock, but the execution of this design was deferred for want of persons who were capable of filling the various offices.

The new amphansacabe gave audience to the envoys of the king of the Seclaves, who brought a present of eighty slaves, and five hundred oxen, from their sovereign; but as they were sent to the *French commandant*, Benyowsky would not receive them, but sent them to Louisbourg, assuring the envoys that they did not belong to him, he having previously resigned the office of governor.

At the same cabar, the count proposed to go to Europe, to form a treaty of commerce and friendship with the king of France, or some other European power, in order to obtain from thence proper persons to instruct the natives in the various arts of civil life. This proposal met with the decided disapprobation of the council, on account of the danger he would incur in going to France, and it was long before he was able to convince them of the importance of the object, and of the advantages that would result from the voyage in respect to the future commerce of the island, and the introduction of the arts and manufactures. However, at length they consented; and in full cabar, delegated to him the power of concluding treaties of commerce and friendship, and of engaging skilful artizans and manufacturers



to come and settle on the island; a regular document to this effect was drawn up and signed in the name of the nation, by the three kings present—Raffangour, Hyavi, and Lambouin.

The count now began to make preparations for his voyage, and appointed the old chief, Raffangour, head of the supreme council during his absence. He also made an arrangement of the affairs of the colony, and left written advice and instructions with the new commandant. Having taken every necessary precaution to prevent confusion or disturbance amongst them, he took leave of the chiefs, who accompanied him to the sea-side, and embarked on board the brig *Le Bell Arthur*, which he had freighted to convey him to the Cape of Good Hope. The parting scene was highly interesting, and did honour to the feelings of both parties. We cannot better describe it than in the count's own words :—" When I came to the sea-side I found myself surrounded by most of the chiefs of the country, and by all the people of the settlement, wishing me a good voyage; and the natives invoking Zanharé to assist me in my undertakings. At the conclusion they all wept; and at this single moment of my life, I felt what the heart is capable of suffering, when torn from a beloved and affectionate society to which it is devoted. At length I went on board, not without paying a tribute to nature, which I *had never* experienced during the most dreadful sufferings of my tyrannical exile."

## CHAP. XIX.

*Benyowsky's Arrival in France—Proposal to the British Government—Sails to America, and from thence returns to Madagascar—Lands at Antangara Bay—Attacks the French Posts—The Government of the Isle of France despatch a vessel to secure him—His Death—Summary of his Character.*

WE have experienced some difficulty in the preceding pages in avoiding the appearance of writing a history of Count Benyowsky, instead of that of Madagascar; and the materials from which our account has been extracted, are of such a nature, that it was almost impossible to avoid it. But in speaking of the subsequent transactions in which that celebrated individual was concerned, no such difficulty can occur; as, by the important events which we have had occasion to relate, he became the absolute representative of the Madagascar nation—a sovereign and delegate, invested with full powers to treat in their and his own name, with any other nation whose alliance was worth seeking, or who considered such an alliance an acquisition. It is true, the character in which he now appears, is anomalous, being the result of a solemn and deliberate act of a people, still in a state of barbarism; and, according to the political logic of European powers, incapable of making such a choice.

Notwithstanding this, we are inclined to think, that, after the election took place, by which he was chosen ampanasacabe of the Madagascar nation, he was virtually possessed of as good a title as *legitimacy* can boast of; and that the French, or any other nation, had no right whatever to question either the power of bestowing, or the propriety of accepting it.

Little remains on record of the count's subsequent history, most of the documents relating to it having been burnt. On his arrival in France he had a long and violent altercation with the French government; at the close of which, however, it appears he so far gained his point, as to obtain rewards for his conduct during his government of Madagascar; and the injustice of the administration of the Isle of France was held up to the execration of Europe. While in France, the celebrated Dr. Franklin espoused his cause; but the French minister had resolved not to have any further transactions with him. He then entered into the service of his Imperial Majesty, to whom he made proposals respecting Madagascar; but not meeting with success there, he left it in 1783, and came to London, where he drew up a declaration and proposals to the ministry of his Britannic Majesty, offering, "in the name of an amiable and worthy nation, to acknowledge him Suzerain, or Lord Paramount of Madagascar; the interior government, and all the regulations of civilization, police, cultivation, and commerce remaining independent; the chiefs and people being only vassals to his Majesty," &c. &c.

It does not appear whether this document was ever presented. If it were, it fell to the ground ; for the count, finding he could meet with no countenance from the British ministry, set sail for America, where he arrived at Baltimore, in July 1784, in the Robert and Ann, Captain M'Dougall, from London, with a cargo suitable for the Madagascar trade, worth about four thousand pounds. Here he obtained another ship and cargo, of equal value, with which he sailed for Madagascar, in October 1784. His family he left in America, on account of Madame Ben-yowsky's pregnancy. The crews of the vessels were, by agreement on oath, subject to his absolute command.

The vessels first touched at Sofala, where he remained some time for refreshment. It appears he did not make the Cape of Good Hope, for fear of exciting the jealousy of the Dutch. On the 7th of July, 1785, he cast anchor in Antangora bay, ten leagues south-west of Cape Sebastian, in Madagascar, where the cargo was landed, and an encampment formed. It was the count's intention to go overland to Antongil bay, and to send the ship round to the same place. While encamped, his old friend Lambouin, the king of the north, came to pay his respects to him ; and the sovereign of Bayana, also, who had formerly been his greatest enemy, came with a large body of Seclaves, and encamped near him. The count proposed to him the usual oath, but he declined it for want of time. After his arrival at Antongil

bay, he went to Angontzy, where he seized a store-house belonging to the French, and commenced the building of a town in the manner of the country, intending to establish a factory. He also sent a detachment of an hundred men to seize the French factory at Foule Point, but seeing a frigate at anchor there, they desisted.

When the government of the Isle of France heard of these transactions, they sent the *Louisa* frigate, commanded by Viscount de la Croix, to destroy the settlement, and with it the count, if that were possible. This determination, however, does not appear to have wholly originated in the offensive operations of the count. We have seen a statement which declares that the *French ministry* sent out a frigate with orders to secure him, alive or dead. Be that as it may, the *Louisa* arrived at Foule Point on the 17th of May, 1786, having on board a detachment of sixty men, of the regiment of Pondicherry, under the orders of M. Larcher, a captain of infantry.

After procuring what provisions they wanted, the *Louisa* proceeded along the coast to Angontzy; and having moored the vessel about half a league from the shore, they sent two boats, well manned, with two pieces of cannon in the bows of each, in order to effect a landing. When this was done they marched immediately towards Benyowsky's settlement. After crossing five marshes, they heard the people at work at the settlement, and soon after saw a red flag, which

is the common signal for battle in the island. Benyowski had by this time retired to the fort with two Europeans and about thirty natives, who happened to be with him at the time. The fort was situated on an eminence, surrounded by strong palisades, and defended by two four-pounders and a few swivels. These were played off against the French, who, however, continued to advance; and, when they got sufficiently near, were ordered to return the fire. The first discharge proved decisive. Benyowsky received a ball in the breast, and fell behind the parapet, whence he was presently after dragged by his hair, and expired in a few moments.

Thus fell the celebrated Count de Benyowsky; and the period is gone by, when party feeling can induce an historian to exaggerate either his good or his bad qualities. His friends, as well as his enemies, have in all probability paid the debt of nature;—some, perhaps, of those who were instrumental in his death, have themselves fallen a sacrifice by the hands of the assassin: and the very government by which he was first neglected, then persecuted, and finally murdered, has been dismembered and annihilated. But although personal feelings no longer operate, the circumstances still remain on record; and if, in retracing the history of Madagascar, it be necessary to bring them to light, there is now less difficulty in forming an unprejudiced judgment, than when the passions were excited by a party spirit, and an imperfect view of his character.

The friends of Benyowsky have represented him as possessing bravery, prudence, resolution, perseverance, humanity, penetration, and strength of mind. His enemies, on the contrary, declare him to be ambitious, haughty, tyrannical, cruel, ignorant, unjust, extravagant; let us see how far the latter opinion is borne out by facts.

His ambition we will not dispute; but it was not excited until he considered himself deserted by the French government; and then can scarcely be said to have been ill directed, or to have betrayed him into any measures inconsistent with the welfare of France, until he found they were determined to oppose him, and even to aim at his life.

That he was haughty, too, we are not much disposed to deny. Descended from a family of high rank, and in a country where the nobility are looked up to with great respect, he naturally partook of the reserve which such circumstances are calculated to produce; and his rank in the army did not tend to lessen it. Notwithstanding this, we do not find it carried by him to such a length as to render him an object of hatred or dislike to his officers or soldiers. On the contrary, we see them strongly attached to him, and ready to forego every engagement, and submit to every sacrifice to promote his views.

His tyranny was of a very extraordinary description; for, after it had enabled him to overcome the prejudices excited in the minds of the natives

by the emissaries of the government of the Isle of France, it induced the chiefs to elect him sovereign of the whole island, and to invest him with powers superior to those of their most beloved monarchs; while, on the other hand, it propelled him to grant to the people a form of government and a constitution, which effectually counteracted the exercise of tyrannical power.

Cruelty can never be successfully laid to his charge; the anxiety he uniformly expresses at the sufferings of his troops, and the exertions he used to supply their wants—the satisfaction he expresses at having prevailed on some of the natives to disuse the practice of infanticide—the moderation he exercised towards those who had formed combinations against the establishment, and the readiness with which he listened to the first overtures of peace, will, we conceive, effectually clear his character from such an imputation.

Of his ignorance on some subjects we are unable to judge; but we think his proceedings in Madagascar fully entitle him to the opinion expressed by the French minister, “that he had, during his travels, learned the art of treating with savage people.”

We will leave the reader to judge whether the charge of injustice is due to the count or to his enemies. And as to his extravagance, the French are by no means competent judges, not having given him an opportunity to display it.

We wish we could exonerate him from every other failing; but justice constrains us to condemn the



manner in which he resorted to the slave-trade \*, while he professed to abhor its principle. Nor can we justify the deception he practised upon the natives, in assuming a relationship to the family of Ramini. Had his calumniators confined themselves to these instances, they might have attacked his character with success ; but the fact is, that notwithstanding the air of philosophy with which they endeavour to disguise their rancour, they did not possess sufficient virtue *themselves* to see that these were vices in *him* : they were therefore obliged to have recourse to falsehood to blacken his character. The calm and dignified style in which the count has related the transactions of his life, is finely contrasted with the bombastic, petulant, and indefinite invectives of his traducers ; and while its minuteness carries conviction to every mind, it stamps indelible falsehood upon their counter-declarations. From this sketch of his character we flatter ourselves the reader will agree with us, that if the count was an adventurer, he was an adventurer of the *highest class* ; that instead of being visionary,

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\* Two or three instances of this are mentioned in his Memoirs. The only possible extenuation that such acts will admit of is the destitute state of the colony. Not being able to obtain supplies from Europe or the Isle of France, he felt himself obliged to purchase them of such private vessels as accidentally arrived. While his own fortune lasted, he paid for them out of it ; he then borrowed of his officers ; and, when both sources were exhausted, he exchanged slaves for them. We will not attempt to justify him in it.

his plans, though novel, were substantial ; and that so far from being entitled to the character of the " wicked white man \*," he may be considered as the *first European friend* the Madegasses ever beheld in the quality of a governor of a colony. †

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\* Rochon's Madagascar, p. 294.

† If the reader has an opportunity of perusing Wadstrom's excellent Treatise on Colonization, he will there find the count's character drawn with a masterly hand, as well as that of his French persecutors.

## CHAP. XX.

*Lescallier's Visit to Madagascar.—His Object and Opinion.—European Influence in Madagascar.—Bory de St. Vincent's Visit.—His Opinion on the Colonization of Madagascar.—Reflections thereon.—Attempts of the British to reduce the Mauritius,—fail at first,—but ultimately succeed.—Governor Farquhar takes Possession of Madagascar.—Gives umbrage to the French.—English Settlement at Port Lauquez.—Massacre of the Colony.—Murderers executed.—Fresh Settlers sent.*

**AFTER** the departure of Benyowsky for Europe, the French appear to have given up all idea of establishing a *colony* at Madagascar; and consequently to have confined themselves to the maintenance of posts, for the purposes of trading with the natives. The importance of Madagascar, as a *principal settlement*, was thus lost sight of through the jealousy of the government agents at the Isle of France; and it was considered as only worthy of being an auxiliary to the latter place, and as a *depôt* for the slave-trade, which continued to be carried on to a large extent on the island, notwithstanding the declarations of the French minister, that he considered it to have a baneful tendency. The French Revolution, which took place soon after, created full employment for the government while it existed; and, amidst the horrors

which succeeded, or rather accompanied its dismemberment, the leaders had no opportunity to direct their views to a distant and unappropriated island. St. Domingo also engaged a large portion of their attention as well as their resources ; and its subsequent violent separation from French dependency, was a sufficient indication of the power which such colonies possess, when they have acquired a just estimate of their own resources.

However, in the year 1792, we find the French National Assembly deputing Monsieur Lescallier to visit Madagascar, in order to see whether it would be practicable once more to establish a colony on the island.

On his arrival at Foule Point, where the French still maintained a post, he found Hyavi dead, and his son, Zacavola, reigning in his place. Lescallier was well received by the young Prince and his prime minister, Rama Efa, who possessed considerable influence over the mind of his master.

The principal object of Lescallier's mission, appears to have been that of sounding the native chiefs, to ascertain whether they were well disposed to the French. His report, as given in a memoir on the subject, in the National Institutes, is highly favourable to the natives\*, and quite as disgraceful to his

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\* One circumstance related by this traveller, and which we have not found mentioned by any other writer, sets the character of the Madagassesses, for hospitality, in a very pleasing light :—

countrymen. "Europeans," said he, "have hardly ever visited this island but to ill-treat the natives, and to exact forced services from them; to excite and foment quarrels amongst them for the purpose of purchasing the slaves that are taken on both sides in the wars that result:—in a word, they have left no other marks of having been there, but the effects of their cupidity. The French government have, at long intervals, formed, or rather attempted to form, establishments amongst these people; but the agents in these enterprises have attended exclusively to the interests and emolument of the Europeans, and particularly their *own profits*; while the interests and well being of the natives have been entirely forgotten: some of these ministerial delegates have even been dishonest adventurers, and have committed a thousand atrocities. It cannot, therefore, excite surprise, that sometimes they have experienced marks of the resentment of the Madegasses, who, notwithstanding, are naturally the most easy and sociable people on earth."

At the desire of Lescallier, the chiefs entered into a treaty of alliance with the French; but the oaths usually taken on those occasions were dispensed with.

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There is in most of the villages a house erected on purpose for the *accommodation of travellers*. It is usually open on all sides, and rendered, in other respects, convenient as a shelter to which strangers may resort without any ceremony. Such an institution is honourable to the humanity of this people, and affords a hint that might be practically improved by civilized nations, without disparagement to their character.

The influence of European intercourse began to be very perceptible amongst the inhabitants of the sea-coasts. Many of the chiefs, indeed, were the descendants of Frenchmen, who had married or otherwise cohabited with the native women ; and, as the offspring of these unions, were always held in high esteem by the natives, they generally secured the rank of nobility amongst them. Most of the chiefs, and many of inferior rank, understood and spoke the French language. The use and value of coin began to be well understood ; and, as a chief of Johanna significantly remarked, " They had learned to prefer dollars and gold coin to glass beads and trinkets." Their commercial transactions, therefore, were conducted by the medium of money, instead of being exclusively a trade by barter. Some of the chiefs had adopted the French costume. Zacavola himself was habited in a scarlet uniform, which had been presented to him by the governor of the Isle of France. In the construction, furniture, and decoration of their houses, also, they imitated the French ; and the accommodations were so similar to those which we might expect to find in the house of a man of good circumstances in Europe, as to excite the surprise of M. Lescallier.

These marks of civilization, however, were confined to the neighbourhood of the trading posts, for in the distant and inland provinces they still retained their primitive manners\*.

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\* This was the case along the western coast, particularly where the French had never had much influence or intercourse.

No attempt was made on the part of the French, after Lescallier's visit, to establish a settlement : the wars which succeeded the revolution gave full employment to the national resources ; so much so, that it was in contemplation at one period to extend the conscription law to the Isle of France, for the sake of supplying the army at home. During the short peace in 1801, Bory de St. Vincent was sent on a similar errand to Madagascar. At that period St. Domingo had emancipated herself, and the French government were desirous of supplying its loss by establishing a colony at the former place. The opinion which our traveller expresses of the island, was favourable to such an enterprise ; but he found a strong objection existing in the minds of the inhabitants of the Isle of France, to the formation of a settlement at Madagascar. We have already seen to what a length this jealousy has carried them, and we may therefore easily conceive that the representations

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In the year 1780, General Burn visited the island on his passage from the East Indies, and landed at St. Augustine's Bay, where he remained about six weeks. During his stay, he went with a party to visit the King of Babaw, which is a small province in the neighbourhood. He received them with great pomp, his attendants sitting cross-legged on the sand, at the outside of his Majesty's tent, and he himself riding astride on the shoulder of one of his guards. The appearance of an English lady, who accompanied the party, excited great astonishment, and the natives came running out of their huts to see her. It was, however but a dumb shew, as the English did not understand Malegash, or the Madegasses English.

of St. Vincent were correct. “Madagascar,” said he, “is capable of being made the first colony in the world, and would supply the loss of St. Domingo if the French government chose it. It possesses advantages far superior in many respects to that unhappy country. It would form a fine military position in any war that may ensue in the Indies. Its productions are infinitely more various—labour would be cheaper—its extent is more considerable—and it would afford a good retreat to those Americans who, having lost every thing by the revolution, are now dependant on our government, who might distribute lands amongst them, and the means of conveyance and temporary existence there.”

“Many of the inhabitants of the Isles of France and Bourbon, who do not understand their true interests, imagine, that if France undertake to colonize Madagascar, it will interfere with their property; and that all the interest of the government, arising from their intercourse with the Indian colonies, being concentrated on a spot which would stand in need of all its protection, the other isles would be absolutely neglected. These alarms are unfounded; for the government can never have a more direct interest in protecting the Mauritius and Bourbon, than when having a more important colony in their neighbourhood, they may fear that an enemy will annoy them in the possession of the *principal* by seizing the *environs*. Besides, the Isle of France can be considered only as a military post, and Bourbon as its magazine.



If France have no other possessions in India—if she determine not to invade Madagascar—and if her Asiatic commerce must remain upon the same footing as at present, she ought immediately to abandon two burdensome isles which are not worth the expense of governing, and of the protection they demand, only inasmuch as they will serve alternately for posts of attack and defence.\*”

Whatever professions the French may have made of their love of liberty, they do not seem at *this*, more than any former period, to have had much idea of extending the blessings of it to other nations. The desire of aggrandisement seems to have superseded every principle of justice and humanity. The experience of the past too, had thrown but little light into their minds; for we here find an accredited agent of the French government, coolly talking of invading one of the largest islands in the world, whose prowess they had had many opportunities of feeling, and whose jealousy was never to be overreached. Such an attempt, had it been made, would have met with no better success than the former ones. It is true the reins of government in France, had

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\* We have given a literal translation of this curious passage, which affords the strongest possible illustration of the truth of Benyowsky's narrative, as it respects the conduct of the government at the Isle of France: and it sets the folly of the French minister of that period in a striking light, in consigning the care of providing for the infant colony at Madagascar, to a set of men who had every inducement to prevent its success.

been seized by one whose energy and perseverance were carried to excess, and who, if he had resolved on the conquest of Madagascar, and a continuation of peace had favoured the enterprise, would have ventured much to carry it into execution. But the distance at which Madagascar lies from France, the jealousy of the neighbouring colonies, and the increasing vigilance of the natives, would have baffled the attempt. Though easily *beaten*, that people will never be *conquered*; but, secure in their forests and lofty mountains, which are inaccessible to Europeans, they possess the means of continually annoying an enemy, and thereby preventing his reaping any advantage from the possession of the country.

Other projects soon called off the attention of the French from the subject of colonizing Madagascar. The war broke out in Europe with greater violence than ever, during which, instead of increasing the number of her dependencies, notwithstanding her extensive success at home, France saw her colonies fall one after another into the hands of her persevering rival. It was long before Great Britain could effect the reduction of the Isles of France and Bourbon. Engaged in extensive maritime enterprises in the European seas, her fleets were busily employed, and the squadron which was sent against those distant islands, was too weak to effect the purpose. Great bravery was displayed in the engagements which took place between the opposing squadrons, and a landing was effected by the English on

the Isle of France : but an unfortunate circumstance having occasioned the destruction of some of the British ships, the troops who had landed, were obliged to surrender, having no hopes of relief. The French flag therefore rode triumphant in those seas for a time.

In 1807, a party of Frenchmen went from the Isle of France to form an establishment at Foule Pointe ; but having unfortunately chosen the sickly season for the expedition, they were taken off almost to a man by the fever.

The continual interruption which the British East-India trade experienced from the French cruisers, rendered it absolutely necessary for the government to effect the reduction of their strong holds in the Isle of France. This annoyance continued long after the French power on the Continent of India was annihilated, and was carried to an alarming extent. It was calculated that the value of the prizes carried into the Isle of France in ten years, amounted to two millions and a half. The vessels thus taken were emptied of their cargoes, and sold to the Arabs, by whom they were afterwards taken to Calcutta and resold. At length, in 1810, a competent expedition was fitted out and despatched against the Isle of France, which succeeded in reducing it. Nor did they meet with that vigorous resistance which they expected. After a short contest, the governor offered to capitulate, and finally surrendered the place. There were at that period in the harbour, six frigates, three

Indiamen, and twenty-four large merchant vessels, all of which fell of course into the hands of the victors. Soon after, the Isle of Bourbon also was taken possession of by the British.

As soon as these important posts were reduced, the British sent a detachment to Foulé Point, and another to Tamatave, to take possession of the posts previously occupied by the French.\* They found the natives well satisfied with the change that had taken place. Those who inhabited the western coast, had long been accustomed to receive visits from the British, whose Indiamen made a point of touching at St. Andrew's or St. Augustine's Bay, for the purpose of laying in a stock of fresh provisions and water; and the integrity and punctuality the natives always experienced in their dealings with them, had excited the most favourable opinion in their minds. This opinion, it seems, had long existed; for as early as the year 1720, when Drury was at Madagascar, the inhabitants of that part of the country which lies round St. Augustine's Bay, looked upon the English as their best friends, while a Frenchman was sure to be massacred if he made his appearance. The change, therefore, which had taken place as to the possession of the two neighbouring islands, was very far from being disagreeable to the Madegasses, and they have ever since shewn the greatest respect towards the British.

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\* The detachment sent to Tamatave, arrived in the sickly season, in consequence of which most of them were taken off by the fever.

When the peace took place in 1814, the Isle of Bourbon (which had changed its name to that of Re-union) was ceded to the French in virtue of the treaty which was concluded; but the Isle of France (or Mauritius, as it is now more generally called) still continued in the possession of the English.

Soon after this period, a proclamation was issued by Governor Farquhar, taking possession of the island of Madagascar, in the name of his Britannic Majesty, as one of the dependencies of the Mauritius. This circumstance appears to have given great offence to the governor of Bourbon, Monsieur Bouvet de Lozier, who loudly protested against such an act, on the ground that that island had not been formally ceded to Great Britain by the treaty of peace which was finally ratified in 1815. This was at best but a negative objection, for he acknowledges in the same paragraph, that France has no claim whatever to the sovereignty of Madagascar, and therefore she could lose no right by Mr. Farquhar's proceeding. But the truth is, M. Bouvet de Lozier, like the rest of his countrymen who had preceded him, possessed a large portion of jealousy, and probably felt not a little galled to see a superior power at his elbow. He must also be fully aware, how very unpopular the French were become in Madagascar by their impolitic proceedings; and the diametrically opposite conduct of the British, who, instead of oppressing and enslaving, sought constantly to enlighten and civilize the natives, formed so strong a contrast, that he

began to fear the profitable intercourse they had so long held with that island would soon cease. Another circumstance also probably influenced his mind on this occasion. The Isle of Bourbon, as well as the Mauritius, was deeply involved in the slave-trade, which the British government had renounced; and Governor Farquhar made no scruple of avowing his detestation of that abominable traffic. Now it is very possible that De Lozier might suspect that some exertions would be made to effect the abolition of the slave-trade in Madagascar, should the British, with their growing influence, gain the ascendancy there, which would materially affect the French dealers in human flesh and blood. It therefore became him, who was placed there to protect their interests, and who had no troublesome scruples upon the subject, to enter his protest against Mr. Farquhar's proceedings. The event fully justified his fears, and we will give him his full share of credit for vigilance and foresight, however deficient he may have been in humanity.

Be this as it may, we find the worthy Governor Farquhar, steadily persevering in the course he had adopted, and without regarding the clamours of those who wanted to be his enemies, exerting himself to promote the welfare of every honest man under his protection.\*

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\* This task was attended with no little difficulty; much opposition was made to the regulations, and at one period a conspiracy was formed and nearly matured, for extirpating the

In 1815, a party was sent over to form an establishment at Port Louquez\*, with the consent of the neighbouring chiefs. An unfortunate circumstance, however, occasioned the destruction of the whole party. It appears, one of the petty chiefs, named Chichipi, was disappointed in not receiving a present from the settlers, and went to a Mr. Burch, who was appointed to superintend the settlement, to demand a piece of blue cloth. This demand met with a refusal; a quarrel ensued, and some abusive language having been used by the chief towards Burch, the latter was imprudent enough to strike him; upon which one of the British party was instantly shot. The affair, however, was, by the intervention of the friendly chiefs, made up, apparently to the satisfaction of Chichipi, who requested Mr. Burch and his party to meet him the next morning to settle the matter in a more formal manner. Not suspecting any treachery, Burch complied, and they went unarmed to the place appointed for the meeting. But while engaged in the negociation, a signal was given by Chichipi, upon which a party of armed

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British from the Mauritius. Happily the plot was discovered, and the conspirators were placed under confinement. The firmness displayed by Governor Farquhar on this and all occasions, and also by Mr. Hall, who was left in command, when the former returned to England to submit his plans to the British government, secured them from any fresh attempts.

\* This Port lies towards the north-eastern extremity of the island.

natives advanced and massacred every man except one, who was wounded, but exerted himself so far as to reach the sea shore, where he threw himself in and was picked up by a boat. He was, however, so much exhausted with loss of blood and fatigue, that he died shortly after.

As soon as this melancholy affair came to be known at the Mauritius, Governor Farquhar sent a deputation under the command of Captain Legatt, to make enquiry concerning it. They soon learned that Chichipi was the only chief implicated in the business, and that his infamous conduct was so far from being approved by the rest, that he was obliged to abscond with his accomplices, and for some time subsisted in the woods, not daring to appear in society. He was shortly after apprehended by the natives, and having undergone a regular trial, was condemned by the tribunal of the country, and executed upon the spot where the massacre took place, although nearly allied to several chiefs. Two others, who were principals in the business, and whose names were Samireci and Cæsar, were condemned by the same court, but they found means to conceal themselves so as that their place of retreat was not discovered.

Governor Farquhar was so well convinced by these proceedings, of the friendly disposition of the chiefs, that another party was sent to establish themselves at Louquez. As soon as they arrived, the neighbouring chiefs voluntarily came forward and tendered their friendship and alliance. Nor was this



all: considering that the unhappy affair which had taken place, required more ample amends, they ceded to the settlers an extensive tract of land and large herds of cattle, the former being guaranteed to them by a solemn act of cabar, in right of a previous purchase.

Thus ended this unfortunate affair, and ever since the British have been upon the most amicable terms with the natives.

## CHAP. XXI.

*Two Native Chiefs sent to the Mauritius for Education—Character of Radama, King of Ova—His zeal for the Civilization of his People—Proclaims the Abolition of the Slave-Trade—Not obeyed—Embassy of Mr. Hastie for the purpose of treating with Radama for the Abolition—Arrival of the Deputation at Tamatave—Journey to Ova—Public Reception—Various Conferences on the Subject of the Abolition—Firmness of the King in demanding Instruction for his People, and the prudent Conduct of Mr. Hastie—The Abolition finally determined on, and the Proclamation published—Joy of the Natives—Important Consequences—Concluding Reflections.*

IN the year 1816, in the month of September, the two brothers of Radama, the king of Ova\*, were sent to the Mauritius to be instructed in an English education. The names of these young

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\* From the account given by the Rev. Mr. Jones of the situation of Tananarive, the capital of Ova, or rather of his route thither, that district lies nearly in the centre of the island. The reader will find Tananarive in the map; but as it is not inserted in any other maps that we have seen, we cannot of course speak to the exact correctness of its situation; if, however, Mr. J.'s account is correct, there cannot be any great error in the spot we have fixed on.

princes were Maroutafique and Rhaovi, the former ten, and the latter eleven years of age. In the acquisition of learning, they displayed considerable parts, and having now returned to their native island, great expectations are entertained of the beneficial result of their visit.

Radama appears to be a man of very superior understanding and talents for governing. He is about thirty years of age, of an affable and cheerful disposition, and of a strong intelligent mind. In his intercourse with his subjects, he is kind and familiar, and they almost adore him. He speaks French, and has also some little knowledge of English, and has a great desire to have the latter taught generally amongst his people.

The idea of civilizing the island of Madagascar, has taken such strong possession of his mind, that he has determined to make any sacrifice in order to accomplish it. At the period of which we have just spoken, his intercourse with the English began to open his eyes to the true state of the Madegasses, and to the means necessary to civilize them.\*

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\* The conduct of Governor Farquhar towards the Madegasses is above all praise; and while it has attached the hearts of that simple and affectionate people to him and his countrymen, it reflects the highest honour upon the British nation. We trust the worthy governor will live to see, in a still greater degree, the happy effects of the moderation and benevolence he has manifested in his conduct towards them: at this period it influenced the native chiefs so far, as to induce them to renounce

There cannot be a more noble sight, than a man in high station, and possessing great influence over those below him, studying to promote their welfare. But the grandeur of such an object is far more striking when the previous habits and intercourse, and the immediate personal interest of the acting character, are directly opposed to such an attempt. Peter the Great burst asunder the chains of barbarism in Russia, and in a very few years laid a solid foundation for that system of civilization and freedom, which is rapidly advancing under its present monarch. Every one must allow that to have been a splendid instance of decision and perseverance; but after all, that Prince cannot be said to have acted upon original ideas,—he was brought up amongst books; and if in the earlier part of his life he had not mixed in foreign society, he had become well versed in the history of other nations, particularly that of England, which certainly served him for his model. Whatever, therefore, his acuteness and strength of mind were, those qualities were enlarged and called into exercise by the constant contemplation of example.

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their annual attack on the island of Johanna and the Comoros. This change, which we have before alluded to, was effected about the year 1816, soon after the unfortunate affair at Port Loquez; and the voluntary relinquishment of such a source of advantages, upon the bare representation of Governor F., indicates a degree of moral feeling that few would expect to find amongst a race of savages.

But it is otherwise with the prince we are writing of. Bred up from his infancy amongst savages, he had never been taught to appreciate the value of civilized society,—while the large revenue which he derived from the slave-trade was calculated to harden his mind against any improvement in the condition of his people. Notwithstanding this, no sooner were the advantages of civilization presented to his view in a proper light, than he determined to effect the emancipation of Madagascar, and to spare neither pains nor expense in the prosecution of his design. The first step towards it we have just related in the suppression of the predatory attacks on Johanna. This was effected by a proclamation of Radama, who at the same time issued another, commanding the abolition of the slave-trade. At that period, however, it appears the prince did not possess sufficient authority to enforce his orders. It was indeed a dangerous step to take. The trade had been so long established, and was so completely interwoven with the whole system of civil, military, and political policy in the island, that the chiefs, who derived the principal part of their revenues from that source, were determined to counteract the design; and had the young prince, whose power was then less extensive than at present, persisted in enforcing it, the consequences would probably have been fatal to him. So little indeed was the proclamation regarded, that, from the time of its promulgation, to the year 1818, (about two years), upwards of *seventeen hundred* slaves had been sent

from thence to the Mauritius alone\*. Madagascar was therefore destined still to suffer from the effects of the slave-trade—but it was for a short time. The intercourse which the king of Ova kept up with the British was of such a nature, that fresh light broke in upon his mind daily; and, in the mean time, his power and influence over the natives continually increased; until, in the year 1820, a fresh proposal of a treaty for the total abolition of the slave-trade, was made by the governor of the Mauritius; and Mr. Hastie was appointed commissioner to undertake the management of the affair. That gentleman sailed from the Mauritius the beginning of September, having attached to his suite the Rev. Mr. Jones, a missionary, who had previously visited the island. As we shall have occasion to give an account of this gentleman's mission in the Appendix, and as Mr. Jones's undertaking was not of a political nature, we shall not anticipate that part of our work. The deputation arrived at Madagascar on the 9th, when they landed at Tamatave. The chief of this place, named Jean René, was brother to the king of Ova. He received them in a very courteous manner, but informed them that his brother was then engaged in a war against some of the southern chiefs,

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\* This account, which is taken from a letter of the Rev. Mr. Bevan's, as published in the Transactions of the Missionary Society, will give the reader some idea of the extent of the traffic, and of the consequent miseries it must, for a long series of years, have entailed upon Madagascar.

and that he himself was at war both in the north and south. The commissioner also learned that both the natives and Europeans at Tamatave, who were interested in the slave-trade, were resolved to do all in their power to prevent his proceeding to the interior, and thus, if possible, to frustrate the design of his embassy.

The scene which presented itself at Tamatave, and the neighbourhood, was of the most heart-rending description. Two slave vessels had just made up their cargoes, and sailed a few days after the arrival of the British; but there were a great number of slave-dealers waiting the arrival of more victims, who were expected from the interior, the fruits of the wars which then prevailed. Mr. Hastie despatched a messenger to the king of Ova, informing him of his arrival, having previously learned that his Majesty had returned victorious to his capital.

After having refreshed and rested themselves, they set off on their journey, on the 16th of September, towards Tananarive, the capital of Ova. The method of travelling is in palanquins, made like a chair, fixed in the centre of two poles, which are carried on the shoulders of four bearers (Marmites); upwards of sixty of these bearers were employed to carry Mr. Hastie's party, with their luggage. On their route thither, the calculations of the slave dealers at Tamatave, were too fully realized; for they met upwards of thirteen hundred slaves, fettered and chained together, who were proceeding from Ova to the former place for sale!

On their arrival at Ambohitrim\*, Mr. Hastie received an answer to the letter he had sent to the king, in which his Majesty expressed great pleasure at his arrival in Madagascar: he also was pleased to assure him of a safe protection for himself and his suite, and requested him to make no delay in repairing to his capital.

After travelling about two hundred and seventy miles, in the course of which they crossed a great number of rivers, lakes, and mountains,—passing also many large and strongly fortified towns and villages, they arrived, on the third of October, at the foot of the mountain on which Tananarive is situated. Here they were ordered to wait the pleasure of his Majesty; and soon after their arrival, the cannon on the hill were fired. At one o'clock, two persons, mounted† and dressed as field officers, came down the hill, and informed the deputation that the king would be ready to receive them at four o'clock, in a public

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\* Mr. Jones has spelt this *Ambwhitrim*; but that orthography is by no means similar to the Madegasse language: and as the town referred to lies amongst the Ambohismene, or Red Mountains, it probably bears the same name.

† No mention, whatever, of horses, as being used on the island, has been made before; nor have we found, in any of the French writers, an account of their being conveyed thither, except in one instance, viz. when Chamargou was governor. It appears he generally rode on horseback, and such was the surprise and terror of the natives, when they first saw that noble animal, which was at a battle, that though *ten thousand strong*, they instantly fled, giving it the name of *Dian Belische*, or King of the Devils.



manner. The two princes, who had been to the Mauritius to be educated, next came to pay their respects to their tutor, Mr. Hastie, who, it seems, had superintended their education. Then came the king's secretary, who informed them that his Majesty was rejoicing exceedingly at the news of their arrival, and that they were to ascend the hill precisely at four o'clock.

As soon as that hour arrived, a messenger came down to acquaint them that his Majesty was ready to receive them, and they immediately began to ascend the hill, when a cannon at the summit was fired. The deputation passed through two lines of soldiers, which reached from the centre of the hill to the royal palace, and who presented arms. Within the court-yard of the donac, was a band of drums and shells, to the sound of which, numbers of the people were dancing. As soon as the deputation entered the court-yard, the king ran to receive Mr. Hastie with great expressions of satisfaction and joy. The latter gentleman saluted his Majesty in the usual manner, by bending one knee, kissing his hand, and laying thereon a piece of gold, saying, *Manassin a toumpacalahi*, or 'Token of respect to you, master!' He then introduced Mr. Jones and the rest of his company, who saluted him in the same manner. They then entered the palace, and were invited by the king to take their seats at a table, on which a plentiful repast was prepared; his Majesty sat at the head of it, having Mr. Hastie on his right, and Mr. Jones on his left hand.

He appeared quite in an ecstasy of joy on the occasion, and treated them with the profoundest respect, enquiring concerning his Britannic Majesty, Governor Farquhar, &c. When they departed from the palace, they were conducted to a large well-built house, which had been prepared for their reception.

The next morning his Majesty paid them a visit in their new habitation, when Mr. Hastie presented to him a letter and present from Governor Farquhar. The two princes also received letters and presents from his Excellency, with which they were greatly pleased.

During the interval from the 4th to the 8th of October, Mr. Hastie held several conferences with his Majesty, on the subject of the treaty for the abolition of the slave-trade, but nothing decisive was agreed to. It seems a grand cabar had been convened on that day, the king being desirous of knowing the sentiments of his chiefs on the subject.

To this council Mr. Hastie was invited, and having first explained to the chiefs the nature of his own mission, and then that of Mr. Jones, who was also present, he descanted upon the disinterested conduct of the English, in thus seeking an alliance with them ; and pointed out the many and great advantages the nation would derive from their friendship, if they complied with his request ; and the evils which would unavoidably ensue from the further prosecution of a traffic so disgraceful and inhuman as the slave-trade, carried on as it was in a country so rich in resources, which, if

the proposed treaty were ratified, would rise in greatness, render the monarch powerful, and his people happy.

In answer to this representation, the king pointed out the necessity of instructing his people in order to give them a clear idea of the advantages of the treaty, of which he himself was fully sensible. Mr. Hastie replied, that as long as slavery was permitted, it could not reasonably be expected that persons capable of instructing his people, would settle amongst them, at the risk of their own offspring becoming the property perhaps of their next neighbour.—“Stop the slave-trade,” said Mr. Hastie, “and you will have people of every nation visiting your country. The Isle of France is not peopled by French or English only. On the contrary, you find there people from every quarter of the globe, because our king and constitution afford equal protection to all.” He then stated that Governor Farquhar would receive his free subjects for instruction, and send some good artizans with the requisite implements; but that it must be his Majesty’s own act alone, which would induce men of talent and ability to settle in the country and improve the people.

The following day the king, who had been in consultation with his ministers from day-light, convened the principal chiefs in the district, and sent also to his grandfather. At four o’clock he sent for Mr. Hastie and Mr. Jones, to attend the cabar, where a multitude of persons were assembled. He

told them he had maturely considered what had been said on the subject of the treaty, and repeated what he had urged before, of the necessity of his people being instructed ; and requested permission to send some of them to England for that purpose. Mr. Hastie promised that every means should be taken to promote the instruction of his people, and, adverting to Mr. Jones, and the object of his mission, pointed out what had been effected in the South-Sea Islands, where, through the agency of a few missionaries, idolatry had been abolished, christianity embraced, wars put a stop to, and the arts of civil life introduced.

These representations made a strong impression on the mind of Radama. On the following day, he sent a letter to Mr. Hastie, addressed to Governor Farquhar, stating his anxiety to conclude the proposed treaty ; but as nothing but instruction could alleviate the misery of his subjects, and enable them to perceive the advantages of the abolition of the slave-trade, he could agree to the treaty only on condition that he should be allowed to send some of his people to the Mauritius and England, and that artificers should be sent to Madagascar. Mr. Hastie replied, that he was authorised by his Excellency, to promise artificers, and to take back some of his people for education, but beyond this he had no authority. The king sent again, requiring that *twenty* persons should be sent to England, as he was persuaded nothing but such a stipulation would reconcile his subjects to the abandonment

of the slave-trade. After consulting with Mr. Jones, who observed, that it was probable the Missionary Society would take some of the proposed Madegasses under its protection for education, Mr. Hastie agreed that six of his Majesty's free subjects should be sent to England. To this proposal Radama replied, he would see them again in the evening.

The conference was renewed at the time appointed. Many of the ministers were present, when Mr. Hastie went over the arguments he had already employed, placing them in the clearest light. He told his Majesty that he was set over his people to govern them, and do every thing to promote their welfare; that he was responsible to the Divine Being for what he did; that *that* Being was able to remove him from his throne, as he had done in the case of Buonaparte, and to give it to another who would rule his people with wisdom, so as to alleviate their miseries, and render them happy, like the people of Britain.

The king, who listened attentively to all that was advanced, appeared convinced, and promised to give his final answer the following day. After this conference he sat up with his ministers till a late hour, debating upon the same subject.

The next morning, being the 11th of October, he sent Mr. Hastie his final determination; which was, that the treaty should be signed that day, and the former proclamation, requiring the immediate cessation of the slave-trade, republished, *provided* Mr. Hastie agreed

to take twenty of his subjects for instruction; ten to proceed to the Mauritius, and the other ten to England. The critical moment which was to decide the welfare of millions, was now arrived: it was an awful one for the British agent, and such he felt it to be. A momentary struggle took place in his mind, occasioned by the appeal of benevolence in behalf of a suffering people on the one hand, and the consequence of going beyond the authority with which he was invested on the other. The contest however was short: with a magnanimity which has conferred eternal honour on his name, after consulting with Mr. Jones, who possessed no power or authority to go beyond what he had said the day before, he declared his determination to agree to Radama's proposal, even if he himself were obliged to bear the expenses of the ten Madegasse youths, who were to be sent to England. The treaty was accordingly agreed on, a cabar convened, the proclamation published, and despatches immediately forwarded to the different districts, to put an entire stop to the selling of slaves to merchants for exportation, from their own country.

The proclamation was as follows:—

“Inhabitants of Madagascar!

“You are none of you ignorant of the friendship we enjoy with the governor of Mauritius, and the devoted attachment we have avowed to him: his attention, unlike that of all other foreign nations, which have visited our shores, has been directed to increase our

happiness and prosperity : he has never deprived us of our rights and properties—he has not suffered the white men to carry off our children into slavery—he has sent us people to teach us arts and industry unknown to us before ; to defend us against our enemies, and to prevent famine by a more extended cultivation. We are happier and safer since the establishment of British dominion in our neighbourhood, and we are grateful to our good Father, who has procured for us these blessings.

“ His nation and king have made laws to prevent you from being carried out of your island into slavery ; and he has punished such of the whites as have presumed to violate this law.

“ He has called on us to assist him in this work for our own benefit, and he has promised his powerful assistance to punish such as may be refractory or disobedient.

“ We willingly agree to this proposal of our Father ; and we humbly declare, that if any of our subjects, or persons depending on our power, shall henceforward be guilty of selling any slave or other person, for the purpose of being transported from the island of Madagascar, the person guilty shall be punished by being reduced to slavery himself, and his property shall be forfeited to me.

“ Let my subjects then, who have slaves, employ them in planting rice and other provisions, and in taking care of their flocks and herds—in collecting bees-wax and gums, and in manufacturing cloths and

other articles which they can sell. I set them the first example myself, by abandoning the tax payable to me upon the sale of slaves for exportation.

“ I direct my brother Jean René, and o th erchiefs upon the sea-coasts, to seize for their own use and profit, all such slaves as may be attempted to be exported in their respective provinces : they will also give every support and assistance to the government agent of Mauritius, in the execution of his duties.

“ I command all my subjects and dependants, and invite all my allies, to abstain from any maritime predatory excursions whatever ; and, more particularly, neither to practise nor allow of any attack or attempt upon the friends of our ally, the British nation.

“ It has been usual to make an annual attack upon the Sultan of Johanna and the Comoro Islands. Our good friend, the governor of Mauritius, dissolved the meditated attack of last year\* ; and we now join with him in forbidding any further enmity to the king, or inhabitants of the Comoro Archipelago, or other islands on the coast of Africa, or north Archipelago, under the pain of our most severe displeasure ; and of incurring the punishment due to pirates, of whatever nation or people they may be.

“ *Such is my will* ;—let it be known to every inhabitant of this island ; it is for their own happiness and their own safety, to pay obedience to this proclamation. (Signed) “ RADAMA.”

“ October 23, 1817.

“ *Renewed, October 11, 1820.*”

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\* See p. 264.—Note.



It is impossible to give an adequate idea of the effect the signing of the agreement produced: thousands of natives were assembled around the palace, waiting, with the most anxious suspense, the determination of an affair, which involved consequences of such vast importance to their future welfare. But, as soon as the happy result was announced, and the British flag hoisted in union with that of Madagascar, a burst of transport, the spontaneous tribute of a grateful and feeling people to their monarch for the gift of liberty, shook the palace, and overpowered the thunder of the cannon which were firing on the hill. Every eye, every countenance beamed with delight; every heart swelled with grateful emotion; and in the midst of the exhilarating scene, the British agents in this work of benevolence and humanity, were beheld with almost as much veneration as if they had descended from heaven to confer the blessing of freedom upon man;—enviable indeed must have been their feelings on that occasion. If one situation in life is better calculated than all others, to raise an human being above every selfish consideration, and to pour into the heart a flood of overwhelming sensations of delight, it is such an one as that in which these good men found themselves, when, with tears of joy in their eyes, they beheld the happiness of the people around them, and reflected on the immense consequences that *must* result from the transaction of the last few moments that had so quickly glided into eternity.\*

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\* We recollect but one instance in modern history that can be compared with it,—but one man whose public acts could

Immediately after the signing of the agreement, his Majesty ordered the necessary preparations to be made for the fulfilment of its conditions ; and a few days after, the selection took place of the young persons to be sent to England and the Mauritius for education. A great competition ensued as to whose children should have the king's permission to go, it being considered a very high honour. Such was the eagerness manifested, that one person said he would give three thousand dollars for permission to send his child : " Well," said the king, " give me fifteen hundred, and he shall go." After a little hesitation, the man answered he would give that sum. " Well," rejoined the king, " as you are in earnest, and sincere in your request, he shall go for nothing." The selection was made from amongst the children of the richest and most respectable people in the capital. Princes Rataffe, and Endrian Semisate, brothers-in-law to Radama, were deputed to conduct these youths to their destination, the former to England, and the latter to the Mauritius.

As soon as the treaty was promulgated, the slaves, which had been conveyed to the coast for the purpose of being exported, were sent back into the interior to be employed in husbandry and other domestic

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render him the subject of similar feelings. We need only mention the name of CLARKSON, and the " Abolition," and the Reader's grateful reflections will supply the rest. The circumstance we have been relating, is an additional triumph to that great man.

occupations. Such was the vigilance of the officers appointed to superintend the observance of the proclamation, that not a slave was sold or sent out of the country, and the European slave-dealers were constrained to retire confounded and dismayed at their disappointment.

Prince Rataffe, who was to accompany the youths destined for England, arrived in this country with his charge, some time in the spring of the present year (1821), and committed them to the protection of the directors of the London Missionary Society. After staying a few months, during which he was gratified with a sight of every thing in London worthy of observation, he departed again for his native country, in company with several persons whose intention was to settle at Madagascar.

We have now brought the political history of this interesting people down to the present period; and after having gone through such a detail of perfidy and cruelty, as well on the part of the natives, as their invaders; the Reader will feel relieved and gratified, to leave them in so imposing an attitude, as it respects both their moral and political state. With regard to the former, they appear before us, relieved from a scourge which has for ages brutalized their character, cramped their energies and talents, and prevented their improvement. Their country is now free of access to men of liberal and enlightened minds; and when the amiable dispositions of the natives, and the

ample resources for commercial and scientific speculation, come to be generally known, it will undoubtedly be visited by many who have hitherto been kept away by the dark character its inhabitants assumed, under the baneful influence of the slave-trade. Taught by bitter experience to doubt the sincerity of Europeans, and to consider them as their greatest enemies, the Madegasses have hitherto presented the appearance of a beast of prey—tamed, it is true, but possessing the power and disposition to revenge the first slight insult, frequently yielding to the suspicion that past treachery had excited, and anticipating such aggression where it was not intended. It was impossible that any effectual improvement could be made in their condition, while the slave-trade existed. Religion and morality could not be inculcated, while the example of the slave-dealers was so directly opposed to their dictates. Education could not be imparted to a people who were continually shifting their habitation, to avoid the attacks of their powerful neighbours. Agriculture could not be attended to when the crops were every day liable to be destroyed by predatory incursions; nor would any one have attempted to introduce the civil arts and manufactures under the bare possibility of being carried into slavery. Now, however, the desire of the natives for instruction may be safely gratified; improvements in agriculture, and a more extensive cultivation of the ground, will undoubtedly take place. Artizans and manufacturers may now safely settle amongst them, having the certainty of protection from the civil power; and a cessation of

war, and the consequent incitements to cruelty, being a probable result at no distant period under the present monarch, the natives will have a breathing time for reflection, and for attending to those religious and moral duties which hitherto have neither been imparted, nor have they had the opportunity of receiving them.

As to their political state, it is absolutely anomalous. It is the only country in the world possessing such resources and capabilities of every kind, that is not either appropriated by an European power, or from which some one of them does not derive a portion of its resources. Our fleets and armies have traversed the globe from one side to the other, until there is scarcely a considerable spot but may be accurately described from recent observation. But of this country *comparatively nothing* is known; and if we wish to obtain authentic information on the subject, we are constrained to refer back to the historical pages of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; to seek it from such sources as, in any other case, the man of science would either reject with scorn, or refer to, from motives of curiosity alone, to ascertain how far, in those ages of credulity and deception, they fell below the present generation, in accuracy of knowledge, and fidelity of description.

Nor is this the only singularity of their case. Hitherto we have been taught to consider them as a race of savages, possessing no other useful qualifications, as individuals, than physical power; and consequently doomed by nature, as well as hard fate, to unceasing

slavery—as incapable of receiving moral instruction, or of comprehending the nature of those political arrangements which distinguish the politer and more intelligent nations of Europe—much less have we believed them susceptible of those *moral* causes to which the superiority of one nation over another is to be ascribed ; and, consequently, to suppose them desirous of *mental improvement*, as the means of attaining *political greatness*, is an idea that, ten years ago, would have been treated with ridicule by any man of common understanding.

Before, however, their intercourse with Great Britain had existed, the period just mentioned, these islanders have burst upon the view of astonished Europe, as the imitators of their new ally, and the resolute candidates for national greatness ;—wrenching off the fetters with which their energies have been confined,—discontinuing those practices which are inconsistent with a state of civilization,—eagerly seeking the means of emancipation from ignorance and superstition,—and commencing a political career which bids fair to rival, in substantial greatness and strength, some of those nations who have hitherto treated her with insult and scorn.

We now find that if Madagascar has remained in a state of barbarism, *Europeans* have actually caused it. If perfidy and cruelty have marked her character ; if war and rapine have desolated her provinces ; if her population has been kept down, and her children transported to foreign climes, to linger out a miserable

existence in unavailing sorrow ; it is European avarice and cupidity that have excited it. On the other hand, if she have never till now received moral and religious instruction ; if she have never been instructed in the arts and manufactures ; if she have never been taught to respect the rights of her neighbours, nor to appreciate the natural advantages she possesses ;—it is because the dissemination of these blessings were totally inconsistent with the continuance of that *accursed traffic*, which, there is every reason to believe, constituted the main object of France, in retaining possession of her as a dependency.

Probably some of our readers may think that we have reflected with too much severity on the conduct of the French at Madagascar. We confess we have felt strongly, and have found it difficult to speak in softer language. With regard to their transactions on the island in the first instance, some excuses may be admitted, perhaps, on account of the darkness of the age, and the imperfect knowledge which then existed, of civil and religious liberty ; but when we see men growing in crime as they advance in intelligence, and using their superior knowledge in subjugating, enslaving, and tyrannizing over their fellow-creatures, their principles can no longer be doubtful ; and it becomes the duty of every one who has occasion to speak of them, to enter a decided protest against them, an omission of which implies a sanction of their conduct. In the history of Madagascar, the slave-trade forms a prominent feature, as having at least retarded its

civilization ;—and the unprincipled and brutal nature of the trade, renders it impossible to speak in terms too bitter of it and its abettors. There was a period when the present French government might have retrieved its character, and, without *any act of its own*, have confirmed the abolition of the slave-trade—thereby proving that they had profited by the painful experience of the past five-and-twenty years, and the example of other nations; and were, like them, disposed to make all the atonement in their power for the miseries their predecessors had inflicted on the innocent Africans. That period, however, was suffered to elapse without any indication of such feelings; and they have now identified themselves with all the former robbers and tyrants of that injured people. If the French government, in *restoring* the slave-trade, (after it had been abolished by a stroke of policy perfectly unique), intended to present a bonus to the slave-dealers, in order to appease them and ensure their concurrence with the political changes that had transpired, they exhibited a folly and weakness that was worse than puerile. But if it was done with a view of securing the profits arising from its continuance, which were enhanced by the renunciation of the trade by other nations—then their moral guilt is of the most flagitious description, and deserves to be held up to the execration of the whole world, and to be handed down to posterity. Whichever of these motives prevailed, it *cannot* end well if persisted in. Soon or late it will draw down the vengeance of that God, who weighs



and judges the actions of nations as well as of individuals—who sees the oppressor and his victim, and has, in his Word\*, declared his hatred of the crime it is our object to expose.

With that Almighty power we leave them, persuaded that every worthy mind would cordially rejoice with us to see other principles prevail, and a final triumph obtained over that accursed feature in European policy—the African Slave-trade.

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\* 1 Timothy i. 10.

## CHAP. XXII.

*Of the Natural History of Madagascar—Oxen—Sheep and Goats—Hogs—Porcupines—Beasts of Prey—Monkey Tribes—Cats—Rousette—Of Birds—Domestic Fowls—Pheasants, &c.—Eagles—Wild Fowl—Various Birds—Insects—Breast Leaper—Snakes—Scorpions, &c.—Flies—Silk-worms—Fishes—Whales, &c. &c.—Sea Boar—Various.*

THE natural history of Madagascar has at present been very imperfectly investigated. The circumstances referred to at the close of the preceding chapter, have hitherto rendered it a dangerous task for men of science to pursue their researches on the island, and consequently but little is known respecting it. The accounts of the earlier writers are vague and uncertain, and contain little more than the native names, and a bare description of the various animals and plants which the island contains. The study of natural history was then in its infancy, and a knowledge of it was confined to a very small number; nor was it probable, that men engaged in a series of commercial and military duties, with the care of providing for and defending an infant colony, should find time to attend to scientific pursuits. The first professed naturalist who visited the island, was (we

believe) Commerson, who accompanied M. Bougainville in his voyage round the world. That gentleman visited Madagascar in the year 1769, and spent a considerable time in collecting, arranging, and describing the various plants and vegetables that he met with. His cabinet of preserved plants was carried to the Isle of France; but his exertions, however praiseworthy and laborious, were not valued so highly as they deserved. After his death, the collection he had made was suffered to fall into decay; and of the manuscripts he had written on the subject, which would have been an acquisition to future naturalists, nothing now remains but a few remarks on the plants described by Flacourt\*.

Since that period, several other naturalists have written on the subject; amongst whom the most considerable was M. Aubert du Petit Thouars. This gentleman visited the Mauritius; and although he did not pass over to Madagascar, yet, as a great number of plants and trees from the latter place had been imported into the former, his accounts comprehended them. His work was begun to be published upon his return to France, but owing to unforeseen circumstances, it was sent into the world in an unfinished state; therefore the natural history of Madagascar has not at present been exhibited in a complete form.

The field for such enquiries is indeed of an extensive description; for Nature has made ample provision

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\* Rochon, p. 162.

for the necessities of the animal creation in general, and of man in particular, in this delightful island. A vast variety of the most useful and agreeable fruits, plants, and roots, are profusely scattered around him, affording a gratuitous subsistence, requiring scarcely more exertion than the trouble of gathering. The plains are abundantly furnished with oxen, sheep, and goats. The fields and woods swarm with game of every description, and a variety of quadrupeds fit for food; and the rivers, lakes, and sea-coasts, abound with wild-fowl and the most delicious fish.

Honey is found in abundance in the woods, and not less than ten or twelve kinds of oil are extracted from various plants and fruits. We shall now present the reader with the detailed account of these various productions, beginning with the animal creation.

The different species of quadrupeds are by no means numerous in Madagascar, but there is no scarcity of those which are to be found there. Of the cow kind, there are four varieties described by travellers:—one similar to our English ox in size, shape, and colour, with long horns\*; a second, (called by the natives *boury*) has a round head without horns; a third kind has horns hanging quite loose, being fastened by the skin to the head. The fourth variety is the bison, which, though very different from the rest of the cow kind, is ranked by natu-

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\* This animal is described by both Flacourt and Drury, as running wild in the province of Machicones. See Note on p. 84.

ralists amongst them. It is a formidable animal, its foreparts being very similar to those of a lion. Its skin is black, and it has a long shaggy mane and beard, a small head, fiery eyes, a capacious forehead, and very large horns, the points of which are wide enough apart for three men to sit between them. Behind the shoulders grows a bunch almost as large as that of a camel, covered with hair. In a wild state they are very furious; the natives take them in pits which they cover with boughs of trees. All these species grow very large in Madagascar, and are sometimes found to weigh eight hundred pounds. Their flesh is excellent beef; and a plentiful supply, at a reasonable rate, can always be obtained by our East-India ships whenever they touch at the island.

Besides these, some travellers have mentioned the buffalo as being found at Madagascar; but as that animal has often been confounded with the bison, and as Flacourt does not mention it, we may suppose it does not exist there.

The sheep and goats are plentiful: the former are similar to those found at the Cape of Good Hope, having large flat tails, weighing from twenty to thirty pounds. The mutton is excellent, and Rochon affirms that the wool is of a good quality; but on this head we are sceptical, as other travellers assure us that it partakes more of the nature of hair than wool, which is generally the case in tropical countries. It is found that in warm climates, and on luxuriant soils, the wool of any sheep degenerates,

and assumes more of the quality of hair.\* Goats are found throughout the island both in a wild and tame state. Flacourt assures us, that they kid three times a year, and frequently bring forth four at a time.

There are abundance of hogs both wild and tame; the flesh of the latter is very luscious and wholesome, from their feeding on land tortoises and eggs, plenty of which are to be found in the thickets and amongst the long grass. The wild hog is described by Flacourt as having two short horns growing out of the snout towards the eyes, from which circumstance Buffon has supposed it to be the Babyroussa, which is also called by some travellers "the wild boar of Africa." The flesh of these latter is reckoned good when fat, but the natives eat neither, having adopted that part of the Mahometan discipline after the example of the Arábs who conquered the island.

Porcupines are very numerous, and although their flesh is flabby and insipid, it is much esteemed by the natives. They sleep some months under ground, and lose their quills at that time.

Hedge-hogs are also to be found every where, and have the same character and habits as those of Europe.

The Tanrec and Tendrac, are animals of a very singular description. The former is about the size of a rat, and the latter as big as a cat, but longer in proportion to its bulk. They are of the hedge-hog species,

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\* Buffon, Vol. XXIII. p. 168. It is an observation too common to enlarge upon, that the richer the pasture the coarser the wool.

being covered with a stiff kind of prickles. The tendrac has a long snout, with which it roots like the hog, and it also grunts and wallows in the mire. Its feet are like those of a rabbit; and in the rainy season it burrows a considerable way into the ground, in a sloping direction, making a zig-zag sort of a hole, finishing towards the surface: here it remains in a torpid state for some weeks, during which it loses its bristles, which grow again when it revives. The natives are partial to the flesh, and take great pains in hunting it.

The baboon (called by the natives *tratratratra*) grows to an enormous size, being, according to Flacourt, as large as a heifer of two years old, and consequently must be at least seven feet high when standing on its hind legs. It is a very savage and untractable animal, and its imperfect and hideous resemblance to the human form gives it an horrific appearance. The natives are very much afraid of it, and it also flies from them.

There are very few beasts of prey in Madagascar, and those are of a diminutive size, if we except the crocodile, which infests every river in the island, and renders it very dangerous crossing them, or walking on their banks.

The Fossa is an animal of the badger kind. It destroys the poultry and eggs. The females and young ones are very good eating.

The Varessa is a species of fox, and is a savage animal: there are great numbers of them in the

woods, and they have been known to attack a single man. They have a long tail, and their hair is the colour of that of a wolf.

The native dogs are small, and of the fox kind, being similar to that animal both in shape and colour. They have now a mixed breed of different colours, which are derived from a cross with those conveyed thither from France.

The Antamba is about the size of a large dog, and has a round head. The natives describe it in other respects as like a leopard. It is very ferocious, and attacks and destroys men and other animals, but it is rarely to be seen, keeping only in the most unfrequented places.

The Mangarzahoe is a large animal which Flacourt supposes to be the wild ass, having a foot like those animals, and ears so long, that in descending the mountains, it cannot see before it. It also brays like the ass.

The Brehis is an unknown animal, described by the natives as being the size of a goat, and having *one* horn in the middle of the forehead. It is extremely wild, and breeds only in the forests of Antsianacta.

The tribes of monkeys are very numerous throughout the island. The *Manghabei*, so called from the district in which it is principally found, is distinguished by its eye-lids, which are naked and perfectly white.

The Mococo is a beautiful animal about the size of a cat, but more slender and longer. It has a tail double the length of the body, marked alternately



with black and white rings. Its eyes are very large, and surrounded with a broad black space ; its hind legs are much longer than the fore ones. It sleeps with its nose on its belly, and its tail is brought over its head. It is of an ash colour, and its coat is soft, glossy, delicate, and smooth to the touch. It is playful like the rest of the tribe, but not so mischievous.

The Mongooz is smaller than the last-mentioned, and is found of various colours. Its coat is soft and glossy, and a little curled.

The Vari is a larger animal ; its hair is longer, and it has a ruff of long hair round the neck. It is of a savage disposition, and roars something like a lion.

Great numbers of white monkeys are found in the forests of Ampatre and Mahafalles, which run in troops of forty or fifty together ; and also a grey kind, which it is impossible to tame, for if confined they are sure to starve themselves to death.

Civet cats are found in abundance; and their flesh is esteemed a great delicacy by the natives. Grey squirrels also are very common, but they are seldom caught alive, and then are untameable.

The Vondsira is like a weasel, of a reddish brown colour. It is fond of honey, and has the smell of musk.

The Saca is a wild cat ; it is very beautiful, and is frequently seen in company with the tame ones. The latter have generally the tails twisted round.

We must not omit the Rousette, or great Madagascar bat. This formidable animal extends its

wings four feet from tip to tip, and its body is a foot long from the nose to the insertion of the tail. In colour, it resembles a fox, and its head and nose also are similar to that animal, which has acquired it the name of the flying fox. Its size in appearance, when at rest, is equal to that of a large fowl, and it is then seen, enveloped in its wings, and sticking with its head downwards at the tops of the tallest trees; but when in motion, nothing can be more formidable. Clouds of them hover about the woods both by day and night, darkening the air, and destroying the ripe fruits of the country. Nothing is free from their depredations. They devour, indiscriminately, fruit, flesh, and insects; drink the juice of the palm-tree, destroy fowls and other domestic animals, unless preserved with great care, and often fasten upon the inhabitants themselves, attacking them in the face, and inflicting terrible wounds. They usually sally out in the afternoon, and are heard at night in the forests at more than two miles distance, with a horrible din; but at the approach of day they begin to retire. These qualities have caused many to consider it as the Harpy of the ancients; they do not, however, deter the natives from eagerly pursuing them for food, their flesh being delicate and much esteemed.\*

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\* We should have been inclined to doubt this, had not Rochon assured us that he frequently ate of them and found them so good. Travellers are certainly often *very hungry*, but we are led to suppose he would not have touched them where good beef was to be had, if he had not found them eatable.

From quadrupeds, we next descend to the feathered tribes, which are numerous and interesting.

Domestic poultry are plentiful; the native ones are smaller than those of Europe; they lay great quantities of eggs, and some of them have been known to hatch thirty chickens at one period of incubation. Those imported thither from France, have been found to keep up their size, when not mixed with others, which belong to the island; the cock is called *Acopolahé*, and the hen *Acopovav*.

The Pintado, or Guinea-fowl, is common, both wild and tame: its native name is *Acarga*.

There are several varieties of the pheasant; one similar to those of France in plumage, and in its musical powers: the natives call it *Acoholahé-hale*.

Another beautiful kind has violet feathers, and a red beak: it is small, and the flesh is delicate.

There are two species of wood-pigeons, one with violet, and the other with green plumage. The turtle-dove is also common in the woods.

Black, red, and green paroquets are found throughout the island. The green are a species of mock-birds, which whistle and imitate all others. There is also a scarlet paroquet, which is very difficult to tame; and it does not survive transmigration to Europe, except great care is taken to preserve it from the cold.

Of eagles, there are three kinds,—the white, the black, and the grey. The plumage of all is very

beautiful: they are usually found along the sea-coasts, and by the sides of the lakes.

There is a small kind of eagle, with white plumage, to which the French gave the name of the ox eagle, from its following the cattle, and living on the flies which swarm around them.

The Phenicopterus, or flamingo, is also found there, with its brilliant plumage: the native name is *Sambe*.

The screech-owl seems to bear the same character for prescience as in Europe; the natives call it *Vau-rondoule*, or "Bird of Death," and assert, that it smells from far those sick persons who are in a dying condition, and, hovering round the dwelling where they lie, utter their doleful forebodings, to the terror of the invalids and their relations.

The spatula, or spoon-bill, is so called because the beak is like that instrument.

Four species of teal are found in the rivers and lakes; and a species of coot, as large as a pullet, with violet plumage, and red feet, beak, and head.

Wild ducks, and mallards, of a variety of plumage, are found in every part of the island near the rivers. The black and white heron also are frequently found, and many other aquatic birds, of which the native names alone being given, a detail of them would be tedious to the Reader.

There is a bird, resembling the cormorant in size and appearance, which the French called the guardian, or pilot of the crocodile—we suppose, from its associating

in some measure with that animal : the natives give it the name of *Vouron-fangharac-Vahâ*.

The *Vouronpatra* is a species of ostrich, having the same nature and habits as that bird. The natives seldom take it, and it frequents the most desert places in the woods.

The *Rehoc* is of the poultry kind, but wild, and is found in the woods :—its plumage is violet, and its head, tail, and feet are red.

Lapwings are called *Tivouch* : they are grey, speckled with black, and have a beautiful crest of feathers on their head.

Two species of blackbirds, the canary-bird, several of the gros-beak kind, partridges, quails, crows, ravens, sparrow-hawks, and kites, haunt the woods ; and a great variety of singing birds enliven those gloomy recesses, with their mingled and entertaining melody, throughout the day ; and when the greater part of animated nature is sunk in repose, a numerous race of nocturnal feathered intruders, with less musical voices, break in upon the awful stillness, and in their turns, and according to their natures, participate the bounties of Providence, and exult in the enjoyment of an active existence.

We have at present, however, met with no account of the latter, except one species, called *Vouron-ambova*, which is supposed to prognosticate misfortune. Its cry is very doleful, and resembles the whining of an unhappy dog, or the plainings of a new-born infant.

The next branch of natural history that claims our attention, is that of insects and reptiles.

There are several species of lizards, the most interesting of which are the chameleon and the breast-leaper.

The chameleon (*Tha*) has been so commonly described by naturalists, that it is unnecessary to repeat it. But we do not recollect ever meeting with a description of the latter, except in Flacourt. Its native name is *Famocantratra*; and it is a small animal, which attaches itself to the bark of trees, and being of a greenish hue, is not easily perceived; there it remains with its throat open, to receive the flies, spiders, and other insects that approach it, which it devours. This animal is described as having attached to the back, tail, legs, neck, and the extremity of the chin, little paws, or hooks, like those at the end of a bat's wing, with which it adheres to whatever it attaches itself, in such a manner as if it were really glued; if a native happen to approach the tree where it hangs, it instantly leaps upon his naked breast, and sticks so firmly, that in order to remove it, they are obliged, with a razor, to cut away the skin also. The natives are very much afraid of this animal, and with reason.

Snakes are very common, and some of them are as large as a man's thigh, probably of the *Boa constricta* kind. None of the species are at all venomous; and though frequently bitten by them, the natives experience no further inconvenience than from the bite of any other animal.

Two species of scorpions, (*Hala*) both venomous, are found there, one of which inhabits the marshes and stagnant waters, where it frequently bites the cattle, who seldom survive it. There is likewise a large black spider, (*Vancoho*) which is represented as the most dangerous insect they have; if a person is bitten by it, he instantly falls into a swoon, in which some have been known to continue for two days, as cold as ice. The remedy used is the same as for the bite of the scorpion:—they make a good fire, and hold the patient near it, and then pour down his throat a decoction of certain herbs, which commonly cures him.

Centipedes, (*Anacalife*), which are venomous, wood-lice, earwigs, bugs, and other offensive insects, are met with in every part of the island.

The Acalalau is a small insect resembling a bug, but not so disagreeable: it is very troublesome in the houses, gnawing the furniture and apparel, and making a great havoc. It grows to the size of a man's thumb, when it becomes winged, and flies away.

The Anacandef is a snake, not larger than a quill. Sometimes it will get into the bodies of the natives, and if not instantly extracted, will gnaw the intestines, create the most excruciating pains, and even occasion death.

The species of flies are very numerous, and some of them are of the most brilliant colours. Very few of them are described,—nor would a detail be interesting to the general reader. We will, however, mention the fire-fly (*Herecheroche*), of which there are myriads

in the woods, which at night present an appearance of the most interesting description. They sometimes light on a house in such numbers, as to make it appear in a blaze. Flacourt was returning home one evening, and was alarmed at seeing his dwelling covered with these insects, believing that it was on fire.

Toads, frogs, pismires, and weevils, the latter of which destroy the rice, are found in abundance in their respective haunts.

There are four species of silk-worms, all of them *quadrupeds*. The first (*Landevé*), produces a single cod, like those of Europe, except that they have little spines; the second, (*Lande-saraha*), form a large cod, which sometimes contains five hundred small ones; the third, (*Lande-anacau*), deposits its pod on a species of cypress-tree, near the sea-side: these cods hang in strings, and the silk is of the finest quality. The fourth sort, (*Landevontaque*), make their cods also single, which are of a quality equal to the last mentioned. It is very remarkable, that formerly the natives of St. Mary's isle used to eat the silk-worm in the chrysalis state, and throw away the silk.

The tenants of the waters next claim our attention. Of these the sea produces whales, porpoises, bonetus, stock-fish, sea-unicorns, (nar-whale), rays, doradoes, soles, herrings, mackerel, turtle, oysters of a large size, cockles, pilchards, sea-paroquets, flying-fish, muscles very large and fine-flavoured, mullets, congers, eels, (spotted with black, but not eatable), and a large variety of other fish, of exquisite flavour.



There is a fish covered with large thorns:—when the back and head is stripped of the skin and flesh, it resembles a human skull; the natives call it a sea-devil.

The sea-boar is almost as large as an ox; it has no scales, but it is covered with hair: it has an opening upon the head, and a dorsal fin. It has also feet like those of a crocodile, small eyes, about fifty teeth on each side of the mouth, each as large as the finger; its hairy tail terminates in a point, and is about six feet long.

There are three kinds of sea-tortoises, of an enormous size.

Black, white, and red coral is found in abundance, and they are covered with sea-shells of every variety of shape, and the most beautiful colours. The excrescences on these coral rocks, form the most grotesque and singular appearance; and the corallines resemble the different trees and plants that grow on land.

## CHAP. XXIII.

*Description of Grains and Roots—Fruits, Trees, Shrubs,  
and Flowers—Botanical List.*

THE history of the plants of Madagascar, which have at present been described, if given at length, would constitute too large a proportion of our work. Several botanists have visited the island, some of whom have paid for the gratification of their laudable curiosity with their lives, owing to the unhealthiness of the climate. It being our object to render this work as entertaining as possible to the general reader, we shall give a description of those plants which appear to us most remarkable or useful, with their botanical names, as far as we have been able to recognize them; and, at the end, give a botanical list of those which we have not identified with the former\*.

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\* As the botanical names were not originally given with the former, it is possible that some mistakes may have occurred in the annexation referred to. But it may be proper to remark, that the list is taken entirely from a work on the plants found at the Mauritius, printed a few years since, by order of his Excellency, Governor Farquhar, which we have obtained a sight of, at the library of the late Sir Joseph Banks. In this work, which contains the names of many hundreds of plants, the several countries from which they were originally brought are annexed to each.

Barley, called by the natives, *Apembe* :—great quantities of this are grown, and it is ripe in the month of June. The natives eat it, but it is hard of digestion. It grows very high.

The Voanghembes (*Dolichos*) are small beans, very agreeable to the taste, and eaten both green and ripe, but are heavy on the stomach : they are sown in June, and ripen in three months.

The Voandsourous are small peas, of the size of lentils : they are sown at the same time with the foregoing, grow very easily, and are of excellent taste.

Antac (*Dolichos*) is a species of French bean.

Voandrou, is a kind of bean, produced with great ease ; the fruit lies underground, with one bean in each pod : the leaves are similar to trefoil, and grow from the stem without stalks. It is supposed to be the *Arachidna* of Theophrastus.

The Varvates (*Erythrina Indica*) resembles the caper-tree. It blossoms in the same manner, and each pod contains one small pea, the size of a lentil, and not inferior to the Voandsourou. It is very fruitful, and grows to the height of a cherry-tree. Silk-worms are fed with its leaves in the province of Alsissach.

Of rice (*Oryza Sativa*), there are the summer and winter kinds. Of the former, called Varemanghe, there are four sorts, i. e. two white and bearded, the others reddish, without beards, and of a rose-colour when boiled. The white rice grows on the high lands, and requires but little moisture ; but the red is grown on

boggy or marshy lands, and the natives frequently use artificial means to promote its cultivation. The Vontombre grows only in winter, is smaller, and of a bitterish taste. There is still another species, called Varehondre, something similar to the first-mentioned, but of no account, and only sown where the others fail of a crop. Modern botanists reckon eleven varieties of rice at Madagascar.

There are several kinds of yams, (*Ignames*), the general name for which is Ouvi:—they are Ouvi-hare, Ouvi-soabei, Cambares, Ouvi-foutchi, Ofeque, Mavondre, and Maleve,

The Ouvi-foutchi are the best and dearest; they grow to the size of a man's body in a fat soil, and one hundred and fifty of their roots are worth an ox:—their colour is grey. The Soabeis are the next in quality, and about half the size of the preceding:—their colour is white.

The Cambares and Ouvi-hares are of equal size, and of a violet colour: the first are nearly of equal value with the Ouvi-foutchi, and one plant produces three or four roots, whereas the latter seldom produces but one or two.

The Ouviares are cheaper than any of the foregoing, but of an agreeable quality; they take root easier, and are the common food of the slaves: they cut them into from four to twelve pieces, and plant them by handfuls. In eight months' time they are ripe.

The Ofeque is a species of yam that yields a bitter

by boiling, which affords the natives an article of traffic. When the bitter is extracted, the natives dry them hard in the sun, and they will then keep two or three years, and are reckoned great dainties by the negroes.

The Mavondre root is a kind of rice of the most agreeable taste ; ten or twelve roots, about the size of a hen's egg, are generally produced from one plant : they have the flavour of the chesnut, but are superior, and lighter on the stomach : their outside skin is thin and bitter, and they are planted whole.

The Ouvi-maleve differs little from the Soabei and Ouvi-hare.

Besides these, there are several sorts of Ouvis, which grow wild in the woods, and are resorted to only on occasions of scarcity, proceeding from war or other casualties : these are the Ouvi-in-lasso, Ouvi-randre, Ouvi-dambou, Fanghitz, Vahala, Fandre, Hompouc, with many others.

The Ouvi-in-lassos have roots of the length and thickness of a man's arm, and they grow in the woods near the coasts.

Ouvi-dambous are like vine-roots, and produce blackberries with the flavour of musk : their shoots die every year ; the leaves are unpleasant, and hard of digestion, and are never eaten but in times of great scarcity.

Fanghitz are roots of extraordinary size, being sometimes found as large as a man's body. They are covered with a thin rind, of a reddish colour, are

extremely sweet, easy of digestion, and diuretic. The moisture in them is so great, that they serve both to satisfy hunger and thirst: they grow under low hedges.

The Vahala grows underground, as large as a good sized pumpkin; they are eaten both dressed and raw, and are plentiful in many of the provinces.

The Hompouc and Fandre roots are well tasted.—The ompilampes and ompizees, a sort of philosophers who live retired in the woods, where they neither plant, sow, nor interfere in the concerns of domestic life, live on these and the last-mentioned roots.

The Sonzes (*Arum Esculentum*) are cabbages with very large round leaves; these have the same taste as our cabbages, and the roots that of the artichoke bottoms.

Houmins, or Voamitsa, are small roots like turnip-radishes, about the size of the thumb; one plant of these produces a hundred in a year.

There are three sorts of Nenufar, with white, yellow, and violet flowers: these are small, and eaten like chesnuts, either boiled or roasted.

The Rangu Zaa is a plant bearing a white flower, and its fruit is a species of onions.

Leeks, purslane, lettuces, carrots, cabbage, four sorts of turnips, anise, and mustard, grow here in abundance. Hemp also is plentiful; and nine species of tobacco (*Nicotiana Tabacum*) are found in every part of the island. The natives chew the leaves of hemp as well as tobacco, and it has a narcotic effect.

The Bananas (*Musa Paradisiaca*) grow in many of the provinces, but chiefly in Manamboule and Icondre. There are several species of them, some as long and as thick as a man's arm, called Ontzi; others about half that size; others no larger than the thumb: those called Acondres, are still less, of a green colour, growing a hundred in a bunch. These constitute one of the principal articles of food of the inhabitants: they are very nourishing, and, when ripe, will roast like apples: they are sometimes gathered in a green state, and hung up to ripen. In the province of Eringdrane, the bark of the banana is beaten and spun into clothing.

The Ananas (*Pignas*) grow in great plenty. The fruit resembles the pine-apple, and is called the king of fruits. Those of St. Mary's island are superior to those of the bay of Antongil, and the neighbourhood of Fort Dauphin.

The water-melons are of two kinds, one with black, the other with red seeds, and both afford great relief during the hot season.

The musk melons and pumpkins have been imported thither from France. The gourds are of two kinds, long and round; the long are dressed in the green state, and eaten with milk: when dried and scooped they are used as bottles.

The sugar-canes (*Saccharum Officinarum*) grow in abundance, principally in the provinces of Matatane, Manamboule, Antavare, Galemboule, and St. Mary's island. There are fourteen varieties of it: they are much larger, finer, and produce more

sugar than those of the West Indies ; but the natives do not understand how to manufacture them to advantage, and the chief benefit they derive from them is to extract the toupare, or wine.

Voanata is the fruit of a large tree that grows by the sea-side ; its meat, though clammy and viscous, is nourishing, and it is eaten with milk or salt ; the wood is very solid, extremely smooth and clean, and is very proper for building, being not subject to rot or to be worm-eaten.

Vontaca (*Cydonium Bengalense*) is a fruit the size of a quince, full of flat seeds. The juice and pulp, when ripe, are of an exquisite flavour, and cast the most fragrant smell : the fruit is however hurtful to the stomach, if not perfectly ripe ; it is called the Bengal quince. A wine is made from it which has the taste of beer, and is very laxative ; the hogs are very fond of the fruit when ripe, and soon get fat on it.

Vua-honda bears a fruit like a cucumber, with the flavour of a quince.

Vua-Rha is a species of fig-tree : the fruit is pleasant.

Diti-azou bears a fruit like a small pear.

The Fenguiera (*Ignatica Elastica*), is a kind of wild fig-tree : it rises to the height of twenty feet, and its leaf is nine inches long and four broad ; its fruit is round and full of granular seeds. The natives are very fond of it, but it is acetous and caustic. This is the *Gummiphora Madagascariensis*, and yields the gum-elastic.



The Touloue is a bush six or seven feet high: its fruit is called the strawberry of Madagascar, and is in great estimation with both natives and Europeans, being delicate and of a most delicious flavour.

The Vua Mina is a singular plant, both leaves and fruit being as red as coral; the latter are very sweet and palatable.

The Vua-too-toac also bears a red fruit of the flavour of a strawberry.

The Anghivi bears a red fruit which the natives put into their drink, to which it imparts a sour but pleasant taste.

There are several kinds of nutmegs, as the Malao-manghit, the Rarabee, the Bashi-bashi, the Rhanha-horac, and the Raven Sara.

The Malao-manghit is a large tree with brown bark, straight trunk, and white wood; its sap is white at first, but being exposed to the air, turns as red as blood: the fruit is a nutmeg, and its leaves yield a sweet aromatic odour.

The Rarabee is a wild nutmeg-tree, loftier than the last: an aromatic oil is extracted from its fruit, with which the natives anoint their bodies and hair. This oil is a specific for the scrofula, and an excellent stomachic.

The Bashi-bashi differs but little from the last.

The Rhanha-horac is a wild nutmeg with a large trunk, and very dense foliage: it thrives best on humid and marshy grounds.

The Raven-sara (*Agathophyllum Aromaticum*) is the Madagascar all-spice. This tree is deserving of particular notice: its leaves yield, on distillation, an oil which partakes of the united perfumes of the clove, cinnamon, and nutmeg. The cooks in India use this perfume in preference to all other spices for ragouts. The tree itself grows very large and bushy, and is found thriving on every soil throughout the island. Its branches grow in form of a pyramid, and its wood is white, inodorous, and heavy: its fruit is a real nutmeg, flattened at both ends, and has a more delicate smell than the leaves. Flacourt says it was rare in his time, because the natives cut it down to get at the fruit.

There is abundance of white pepper (*Lali Vitsi*) in the province of Manghabei; it grows in other parts; but there the woods are loaded on all sides with it. It ripens in the months of August, September, and October, when the turtledoves and wood-pigeons feed on it.

The great Cardamum, (*Angustafolium*), otherwise Malaguet, or grain of Paradise, grows also in abundance, in the province of Galemboule: the fruit is as red as scarlet, the meat white, of an agreeable tart flavour, with black seed.

The true ginger (*Zinzinber*), is also grown there. Flacourt says it is not plentiful, but Francis Cauche affirms that it grows throughout the island, and that the natives plant it round their houses for the purpose of catching the rain, which falls on its leaves,

and also round the bee-hives, as food for the bees.

The Sacaviro-ambou, or hog-ginger, (*Zarumbet*,) grows on the mountains : it is a kind of Zedoary.

The cocoa-nut, (*Cocos*), is not indigenous in Madagascar. It was in fact unknown, till about one hundred and fifty years since, when accident drove some of them on the coast, by the waves, which produced the first trees of the kind; they appear to thrive very well.

The Indian saffron grows likewise on the island. Saracine resembles ginger in taste and its yellow colour : it is used to relish meat.

Voatzarte grows upon small trees, with broad leaves : the fruit is gathered like onions, of the size of an egg, full of juice within, like the cocoa-nut; the peel, when dried, has an aromatic taste, and is eatable. The natives make ropes, mats, and baskets, of the leaves.

The Achith is a plant that creeps on the ground like a vine; the leaves are round, pointed at the end, and dented like ivy. It is an evergreen, and its fruit, of the size of an unripe grape, ripens in December, January, and February.

The Ambouton (*Linaria*) is a small plant, like flax, of a bitter styptic taste. The natives chew this plant to blacken the teeth, lips, and gums : it is corroborative, and, in times of famine, is eaten to support and preserve strength.

The Lengou, (*Noix-ventes*), is the fruit of a creeping plant : it is the size of a nut, thick-shelled, and

tastes like the large green plum ; the outside is made use of for dying black.

Zamale is a fetid creeping herb, used also by the natives for dying black ; and it is likewise of use to cure ulcerated gums ; but, by the use of it, the breath becomes insupportably strong. The nurses use this plant to rub the gums of children.

The Tamboure is the same as the Indian betel ; the natives constantly chew it, with thyme and voadourou fruit, after the East Indian manner.

In the province of Matatane, the Fouren-fourou, or Indian areca, is plentiful.

The Banghets, (*Indigofera*), of which there are eight varieties, called by the Indians, Anger, is the plant, from which indigo is extracted.

Fanshaa, is a great and high tree, which yields a reddish liquor a considerable time after it is cut down: its leaves are like fern, the wood veiny and hard, except the heart, which is soft.

Rauver, (*Aloes Sylvestris*), is a tree, whose leaves, like the aloe, are half an ell long, but thinner, and are made use of to cover huts and cottages :—they are called Fandre.

Latecanghomelahe, or bull-stone, (*Testiculus Tauri*) from the resemblance in the fruit, is a creeping plant, with a white blossom, that smells like jessamine.

Singofau, is the leaf of a plant which adheres to the trees like ivy ; the leaf is large, being three palms long, and about one broad ; the natives bruise and

apply it to the eyes, to which it is very serviceable in strengthening the sight.

The Rhomba, (*Menthe Franchi*), is an herb, and a species of balsam: it grows about four feet high, shoots out very large leaves, and has the smell of cloves and cinnamon.

Mouyta, or the Eastern Cypress, (*Cyperus Orientalis*), is found in abundance on the sides of the rivers and marshes: the natives make use of it in disorders of the head.

The Tongue, (*Saponaria*), is similar to the European sope-wort, and, like it, bears a flower like the jessamine. The root is a strong bitter, and is reckoned a specific in the heart-burn, and an antidote against poisons: there are two species, one bearing white, the other purple flowers; the former is the most efficacious.

The Anramatico is a large plant, its leaves are large, and have shoots at the extremities. The flowers are very large, and form a basin that will hold more than half a gallon of water, and are generally full. The fruit is very curiously formed like a vase and cover. The natives superstitiously refrain from gathering it in their journeys, believing that rain would immediately ensue: the Europeans, however, are less scrupulous, and have availed themselves of its agreeable aid, when in want of provisions.

Voamene, (*Indes Condure*), are small beans or peas, produced by a creeping plant: they are of a red colour. The native goldsmiths, who have no

knowledge of borax, solder their gold by dipping in a mixture of pounded voame and lemon-juice.

The Fionouts is an herb bearing yellow flowers, and very thick leaves ; when burnt green it has the smell of melilot, and the ashes make lye.

The Fimpi (*Costus Indicus*) is a tree, of the size of an olive, and is deemed to be the Indian Costus. The bark is of an ash-grey colour, and has the perfume of musk, and its taste has more pungency than that of pepper. The leaves are similar to those of an aloe, and have the same smell as the bark : they excite sneezing. The wood is white, and hard, with a strong scent. This tree is called by the ancient Greek physicians, *Agallochum* and *Xyloaloe*, or *Aloe-wood* ; and by the Portuguese, *Paodaquilla*.

The Mandrise is a tree whose wood is marbled, and of a violet colour in the heart : the leaves are small.

The Hazon Mainthi, or black-wood, is a large tree, whose heart is ebony ; it is loaded with small leaves like the myrtle, of a dark green, and the bark is blackish.

The Anacouts bears a fruit larger than the finger, of an ash-grey ; it contains a sweet and white juice, made use of to turn milk : the leaves resemble those of a pear-tree.

Tendrocosses bears a kind of pulse.

The Tarantale is a species of box-tree, as is also the Vua-fatre, whose fruit is eatable and aromatic.

The Souzenelahe is of two sorts : the wood smells

like cummin-seed, but stronger ; the bark resembles that of elder, and is stronger than the wood in smell : the natives grind the bark with water on a stone, and use it in fevers, and in curing every kind of wounds.

Encafatrahe is a tree whose wood is green next the heart, and veiny : it is similar in smell to the *Lignum Rhodium*, and when ground and applied to the stomach, is good against the heart-burn and faintings.

Mera is a tree whose wood is yellow in the middle, without smell, and as hard as box : its leaves are like those of an olive.

Vintang is a tree whose wood is never worm-eaten, and is used by the natives for canoes : it produces a gum or resin, particularly useful in wounds.

The wood of the Azonouts is fit to make combs of.

Tambouhitzi is a tree whose wood is of an orange colour in the middle, but of no use in dying.

Fatra (*Terminalia Fatre*), is a species of benjamin, as is also Tanranjou ; the latter bears buds on the fruit.

Sandraha is a straight and tall tree ; the wood is blacker than ebony, without knots or fibres, and may be polished and smoothed like horn : it grows near Ranoufoutchi, and will seldom cut to more than seven inches diameter.

The Cocambe is another black wood, more crooked than the latter ; some of them have trunks and branches very large, but they have few leaves or flowers : the wood when burnt yields a most agreeable smell.

Envilasse is another species of ebony, similar to the Sandraha.

Taga is used for making handles for spears.

Tangmonnam grows on the summits of the mountains ; its wood is of a brownish yellow, very heavy, and is used for inlaying and making lance handles.

Tamboure-cissa is a tree bearing apples, which in ripening, open into four parts ; the inside pulp is full of kernels, covered with a thin orange-coloured skin, which yields a tincture like the American rocou.

The Anaco, like the cypress, grows by the side of the waters.

Assonpassehis bears a fruit of the size of a date, and of an excellent flavour.

Vahats is a small shrub, the bark of whose roots is used for dying ; it is taken off, when fresh, by water ; when dried, it is pared ; and in using, it is boiled in silk or woollen, on a slow fire, in a lye made of the same bark : in this manner they dye their stuffs and silks of a red, the colour of fire ; and by adding a little lemon-juice it will form a fine yellow.

The Angive, or tamarind tree, (*Tamarindus Indica*), is very plentiful : there are two sorts ; the lesser bears a fruit the size of a walnut ; the greater, which is common in Galemboule, is as large as a hen's egg, of a scarlet colour, and exquisite taste : a decoction of the roots cures the heat of the urine and the gravel.

Andian bouloha (*Cynoglossum Arboreum Maritimus*), is a small shrub that grows on the sea-shore, whose leaves resemble those of the herb called dog's tongue.



Varaucoco is a plant that twines round large trees, and bears a violet-coloured fruit as large as peaches, of an admirable taste, extremely sweet, but viscous, with four great kernels in the middle. The wood, though worm-eaten in a year, is used for hoops : a red gum, like blood, oozes through the bark, thick and resinous, which dissolves by heat, like gum lactis, and has nearly the same smell.

Rhaa, called in the country the Dragon tree, (from the figure of that animal, as is reported, being distinctly imprinted on the fruit when the skin is off), grows as large as a walnut-tree, and by making an aperture in the bark of the trunk or branches, a gum springs out as red as blood, on which account the natives called the tree *rhaa*, or *blood* ; and apothecaries, the gum dragon's-blood. The wood is white, and soon worm eaten ; the leaves like those of a pear-tree, but longer. The fruit, called Mafoutra, has the form and size of a small pear, the end thicker, with five points or extremities, which contain a kernel covered by one membrane, of the form, colour, and almost the taste of a nutmeg. It is affirmed that the figure of a dragon was imprinted on this fruit under the skin that covers it ; but Flacourt, who opened many, discovered the falsehood of this account. A fat thick oil is extracted from the kernel, which is counted a specific in inflammations, erysipelas, itch, and extraordinary swellings : a decoction of the bark is useful in dysenteric cases.

Lalanda, is a jessamine of the height of a small

shrub; the leaves are like those of the European jessamine, and the flowers are extremely odoriferous. They are used by the women to scent the oil of sesame, or menachil.

Hounits Ancason, is a small shrub bearing a flower of the smell of jessamine, but larger and whiter; the stem which supports it is white, and six inches long.

Voale, is a small shrub that bears a flower like the liricon-fancy, called by apothecaries *lilium convallium*.

Langhare, is a small shrub that usually grows under bushes and hedges, and shoots long leaves, notched like a saw, similar to the chesnut-tree, but closer and more pointed at the ends. The stock is straight, and the flowers, which grow without any seeming fastening or support through the bark all over the trunk, are blood-coloured, of a pungent taste, laxative, and raise a salivation if chewed.

Mimbouhe, or Sonde-fa-fat, is a plant growing on the sea-shore; the natives rub their bodies with its leaves when fatigued, which refreshes them, and cheers their spirits. Its leaves are incorruptible, and they use them successfully in wounds.

Foo-ra-ha (*Catophyllum Inophyllum*). This is one of the finest trees on the island, and the most useful of the hot climates. Next to the teak, it is the best timber for ship-building that can be got in India. It is very similar to the Tacamabaca of the Isles of France and Bourbon, and, like that, yields

a gum-balsam, which is useful in curing wounds and sores. This tree is large and leafy, with spreading branches, and is remarkable for its prodigious height.

The Nonnuc, (*Figua Cornacea*), is an Indian fig-tree, and deserves particular notice. The Portuguese called it *arvor-de-rois*, or root-tree, from its aptness to take root at the ends of the boughs: these touching the ground, become new trunks, and shoot fresh branches, which in their turn do the same, thus multiplying to the number of forty or fifty, without separating from the original stock, each growing equal in height, and forming a circle so large, that a hundred persons may shelter themselves from the heat or rain under it. Flacourt relates that he saw several in the neighbourhood of Fort Dauphin which had four new stocks, each twelve feet in circumference; and that from each stock others had sprung, inclining to, and ready to take root in the earth, at forty-eight feet distance from each other.

The Voanounouc, (*Figua-avi-avi*), is an Indian fig-tree, and its fruit has the taste and shape of European figs. This tree, upon incision, yields a lacteous juice. The bark is used for cordage.

Veva, is a small shrub with leaves similar to those of an almond-tree; of a dark green above, and white and hairy underneath, with an attractive quality.

Himavale, is a tree with six leaves on each little branch placed opposite each other, odoriferous, and esteemed a good cordial.

Endrachendrac, is a large tree whose wood is yellow, odoriferous, heavy, and hard as iron. Its name signifies *lasting without end*, and it is so called from its suffering no alteration under-ground.

Isimandan, is a tree with few leaves, useful in cardialgias, the plague, and other contagious disorders.

Ferocosse, is a slender shrub which produces small round cabbages of excellent flavour.

Mandouavate, is a tree guarded by a green bark, hard, and very prickly. It produces a fruit resembling filberts; the wood is used for dart-handles.

Sira Manghits, (or odoriferous, from the agreeable smell of the leaves), is a slender tree, useful to cheer the spirits: the leaves have the smell of white and yellow sandars; the bark, that of cloves, and it produces a sweet-smelling resin.

Aboulaza, is a tree whose wood also is a cordial.

Lahiric, is a tree whose stem is upright and hollow, and the leaves are fixed round it in a spiral line, like a screw.

Fooraha, is a tree which produces, by incision, an odoriferous balsam, of a green colour, which is a sovereign remedy for every sort of wound or bruise: when mixed with oil, the ladies use it as an ointment for their hair. It bears a large fruit.

The Mihohats, is a tree of cordial properties.

Arindranto, is a tree whose rotten wood, when burnt, yields a wonderful fragrance, and is exceedingly proper for perfumes.

Ouvilassa, is a creeping plant, whose root resem-

bles that of jalap. It yields a gum, or resin, like scammony, and purges with great violence.

Saldits, or Manouquibonga, is a fine woody plant like a vine, producing bunches of large red flowers like feathers: the seed is emetic, and the root of the same plant has an opposite effect.

Pendre, is a tree that shoots leaves higher than an aloe, and bears ten or twelve white flowers of an excellent odour; the women make an infusion of it with oil of menachil or sesame.

Apocapouc, (*Euphorbia Tirucalli*), is a tree whose leaves and flowers are like those of spurge laurel; the fruit is of the size of an almond or nut, and is a strong poison. Nevertheless an oil is drawn from the kernel that is used in anointing the hair.

The Haram is the loftiest and largest tree in the province of Voolou Voolou. Its wood is white, but has a red tinge near the heart. When full grown, it sheds its bark every year. The trunk is even and without boughs, till near the top, which is crowned with a huge tuft of leaves. On incision it exudes, in great abundance, a white aromatic resin. The women make a paste of this, with which they anoint their faces, to preserve the freshness of the skin. If burnt, it exhales an aromatic perfume, like incense. The fruit is a nut, of which the shell alone is aromatic.

Tevartna.—This tree exhibits a very curious conformation; it grows in a pyramidal shape, the branches representing seven distinct stories, being

regularly ranged horizontally, at equal distances round a straight smooth trunk.

Ouviau, is a tree bearing a kind of almond, from which is drawn an exquisite oil for the hair, and for saunces.

The Voulou, (*Bambusa Arundinacea*,) is a kind of Indian cane: Lindschoten and Acosta, call it *mambu*, or bamboo. The pith is moist, and something like milk: the Arabian physicians call it *tabaxir*, and the Indians *sacar-mambu*, and it is in high esteem throughout the East. Their plenty in the province of Voulou Voulou, gives the name to the country—bamboos and rice being almost the only produce; the former are cut down by the natives and burnt, the ashes being as a manure for the latter. Some of them are as thick as a man's thigh, tall, black, and round, constituting the chief beauty of the country; every three years the tree bears a fruit of the size of a small bean:—flour, equal in goodness with that of European wheat, might be made of this fruit. This tree is as useful to these islanders as the cocoa-tree to the Indians: it supplies materials for kitchen and household furniture of all sorts and for all uses; small wherries for the rivers; roofs, floors, planks, and stays for buildings, sedans, or palanquins, &c. &c.

Ampoufoutchi, is a light white wood easy to be worked, and the bark is fit for cordage.

Anaze, is a large tree, and grows like a pyramid; the fruit is full of white pith, with the taste of tartar, and of hard kernels, like the pine-apple.

Tavelouve, is a tree whose leaves are narrow and long, without stalks, and they grow round and appear as if glued to the branches.

Ouvave, is a knotty reed like the Indian cane. The root is eatable, and the wood, which is of a violet colour, serves to dye red.

Grapes of a fine quality grow in the desert of Alsissach, and at Fort Dauphin. The inhabitants, ignorant of their quality, were formerly afraid to eat them. They were introduced by Flacourt, who gathered the first ripe fruits in January, 1655.

Voarots, is the fruit of a large tree, (*Cerua Madagascariensis*,) with leaves resembling those of an olive, which, added to the height and extent of the boughs and branches, exhibit a most agreeable sight, and are extremely ornamental :—the fruit is of the size of a cherry, with a thick shell like a nut, exceedingly bitter, and of three kinds, red, white, and black.

Voaverone, is a fruit of a violet colour, not larger than a red currant,—sweet, and agreeable to the palate, and dyes black and violet.

The white mulberry, (*Morus Ampaly*,) is found in this country extremely sour and sharp: the leaves have a bare resemblance to the European mulberry.

Azonvalala, is a small red agreeable fruit, without juice, and grows upon small shrubs among the bushes.

Voatsourte, is a small solid fruit, like nutmegs, with the flavour of a walnut, either boiled or roasted.

Tocanhola, is the fruit of a tree resembling a pear-tree ;—it kills dogs: the tree grows extremely high ;

the wood, of musk colour, is the hardest and heaviest in the country, and bears a fine polish.

Voanane, is a fruit half a foot long, consisting of four parts, with the taste of a stony pear, and is a sovereign remedy in laxative disorders.

Entsacale, is the fruit of a large tree, which grows extremely high and perfectly straight: the leaves are few, and resemble those of the nut-tree: the fruit is divided into little cells, by a membrane thinner than the skin that covers them, of a yellow colour, full of seed, and some juice of an agreeable taste. This fruit grows upon the trunk from the bottom to the top, and is only fastened by a very curious thin stalk. There are three kinds of it;—that already mentioned; the second with the outside black; and the third of an ash grey: they have each of them veins and fibres lying in the bark.

Fonti, is a plant that grows like a plume of feathers, with leaves six feet long, and two broad. Many of them are ten feet long without the stalk, which is two feet; the fruit is called Voatfontsi, or Voat-dourou, and is enclosed in a hard rind or bark.

The Hintchy, is the most common tree in the province of Voolou Voolou. It forms delightful avenues, having its top covered with thick foliage; it resembles a plum-tree, and rises to the same height. Its wood is red, bark smooth and white, and leaves broad, and of a beautiful green.

The Tanguem grows on the coast; the wood is hard, and fit for joiner's work: the fruit is a formidable poison, and the natives dip their spears in the juice of it.



The Assy, is a beautiful palm-tree; it rises ten feet high, and has no leaves except at its top, which is crowned with two or three rows of them four or five feet long, and an inch and a half broad, exhibiting the form of a large umbrella. The trunk is marked with the leaves which have successively fallen off in its growth.

The Voo-a-lomba, (*Buddleja Madagascariensis*,) is an annual vine which bears a fruit preferred by Europeans to all others:—it is called the grape of Madagascar; its root is a species of yam.

Anakwey, is a large sensitive plant.

Azambou:—this plant bears a fruit in form of a red nosegay.

Vogumdasing Farpechorou, a starry lily. This is a parasitic plant; its flowers announce the season for catching whales, and the natives decorate their boats with large bunches of them.

Ampalt, a plant with a round leaf, used by the natives for polishing iron.

Farafar, a parasitic plant, bearing a long red flower in form of a fork with five prongs.

Sanoang-matan, a kind of asparagus.

Tchilotoo, a species of white tulip.

Talate, is a plant with thick leaves, and a red fruit like the holly-hock.

Enghi-panza, little indigo.

Cani-pouti, is an herb with broad leaves, the juice from which is used by the natives to draw figures on the different parts of their bodies.

Vua-namboo-avon, is a plant with whitish leaves,

violet flowers, and a red fruit formed like a bouquet. It is serviceable in cuts and ulcers.

Manouquibonga, a bush with branches like the vine. Its beautiful red flowers have the appearance of a bunch of feathers.

Vohan-filan, a tree twelve feet high: the trunk, which is quite straight and leafless, is full of thorns. Its leaves are of a beautiful green colour, about four inches and a half long, and two and a half broad: these it bears at the top, where the foliage is thick and perfectly round; the wood-pigeons are fond of its fruit, which has a very singular form.

Vua-azigna.—This is the straightest and loftiest tree in Madagascar: its wood is hard, heavy, and yellow, and is used by the natives for building their houses, and the keels of large canoes. It exudes a resin of the colour of amber, but inodorous and viscous. An oil also is extracted from this tree, which is very valuable, and being mixed with rice, renders it palatable and delicate.

The Ahetsmanga, is a plant resembling hemp; it grows about five feet high, bears a small long leaf, and a pod containing about a dozen seeds like those of hemp. The natives smoke this plant: they cut leaves and seeds together, and lay them in the sun three or four days, till they are very dry, when it is fit for use. They smoke it through pipes made of reed or small cane, and sometimes a long shell found on the sea-shore. It is very strong, and intoxicates them even to distraction, their eyes looking fiery, and

their countenances wild and fierce : those who accustom themselves to it, are fit for nothing till they are in a state of intoxication with it.

There is a tree called the Fig-tree of Adam, (*Musa Paradisiaca*,) the juice of which is used in dying, to fix the colour and render it permanent. It is a species of Banana.

The Sanga Sanga is the real *Papyrus Nilotica*, and of it the natives make their paper.

The Arandato, is a tree whose bark is used to make ink.

The cotton-tree grows in abundance in some of the provinces. Its quality is very excellent, and is reckoned equal to that of Bourbon : indeed, a great proportion of that which is called Bourbon cotton, is no other than the produce of Madagascar.

Lemons, oranges, and limes, (*Citrus Medica*,) are also very plentiful.

The Raven Palm, is one of the most useful trees on the island. It rises to a great height, and serves to shelter their houses, near which it is generally planted. The ends of the stems are prepared and eaten like the palm cabbage. Its bark is hard ; and the wood, which is used in the construction of houses, is incorruptible : the ribs of the leaves are used for partitions and floors, being tied together in a skilful manner. They likewise cover their huts with the leaves, which form a durable roof : these serve also for dishes, plates, and cups. A gum is extracted from the blossom, of an exquisite flavour, and as sweet as honey.

*List of Plants, not identified with the foregoing.*

Carena Indica	<i>Monandria</i>	<i>Monogynia</i>	Balsier
Angustifolium Repens	—	—	Cardamom
— Madagascariensis	—	—	Galanga
Cernua Madagasc.	<i>Diandria</i>	<i>Monogynia</i>	Olive
Panicum Polygamum	<i>Triandria</i>	<i>Monogynia</i>	Guinea Grass
Lobelia Triangularis	<i>Pentandria</i>	<i>Monog.</i>	
Sceevola Koenigii	—	—	Sevoli de Kœnig
Massaenda Glabra	—	—	
Solanum Nigrum	—	—	Purple Madagascar Brede
—	—	—	White Ditto
Solanum Indicum	—	—	Indian Nightshade
Strychnos Vontac	—	—	
Ehretia Madagasc.	—	—	Cabrillet of Madag.
Ceanothos Capsularia	—	—	Ceanate Capsulaire
Mangifera Pinnata	—	—	Manguier à Grappes
Leea Sambucina	—	—	Scarlet Leea
Cerbera Tanghin	—	—	Tanguin
Vinca Rosea	—	—	Red Perriwinkle
Tabernamonta Madagasc.	—	—	Madag. Tabematava
Urania Speciosa	<i>Hexandria</i>	<i>Monog.</i>	Traveller's Tree
Dracena Esefolia	—	—	Reine de Bois
Aloes Sylvestris	—	—	Wood Aloe
Tacca Madagasc.	—	—	Touvoulou Madag.
Flagellaria Indica	—	<i>Triginia</i>	Indian Flagelleum
Combretum Purpureum	<i>Octandria</i>	<i>Monog.</i>	Purple Combittum
Mimusops Kauli	—	—	Kauli
Dodonæa Angustifolia	—	—	Narrow-leaved Dodonea
Lawsonia Spinosa	—	—	Spinous Lawsonia
Saphora Occidentalis	<i>Decandria</i>	<i>Monog.</i>	American Sophora
Hymenæa Vernucosa	—	—	Madag. Locust
Guilandina Bonduc	—	—	Nicker Bush
Oxalis Repens	—	<i>Pentandria</i>	Creeping Oxalis
Eurya Madagasc.	—	—	Eurya

Nymphœa Stellata	<i>Polyandria</i>	<i>Monogynia</i>	Stellate Water Lily
Dombeya Tomentosa	<i>Monadelphina</i>	<i>Dodecandria</i>	Downy Dombeya
Hybiscus Papulneus	—	<i>Polyandria</i>	Poplar-leaved Hybiscus
— Papulneoides	—	—	Bastard ditto
— Tiliaceus	—	—	Lime-leaved ditto
Barringtonia Speciosa	—	—	Square Bonnet
Crotalaria Tinctoria	<i>Diadelphina</i>	<i>Decandria</i>	Indigoferous Rattlewort
Cytisus Cajan	—	—	Guinea Pea
✓ Coronilla Grandiflora	—	—	Great-flowered Coronilla
Hypericum Haronga	<i>Polyadelphia</i>	<i>Polyandria</i>	Haronga
Casuarina Equisetifolia	<i>Monœcia</i>	<i>Monandria</i>	Filao
Typhia Angustifolia	—	<i>Triandria</i>	Lesser Reedmace
Hernandia Sonora	—	—	Jack-in-a-box
Morus Ampaly	—	<i>Tetrandria</i>	Ampaly
— Madagasc.	—	—	Green Mulberry
Guettarda Indica	—	<i>Hexandria</i>	Ind. Guettarda
Hirtiera Littoralis	—	<i>Monadelphia</i>	Looking-glass Tree
Canarium Haramy	<i>Diœcia</i>	<i>Pentandria</i>	Madag. Canarium
Dioscorea Aculeata	—	<i>Hexan.</i>	Prickly Yam
Flacourtia Ramontchi	—	<i>Icosand</i>	Madag. Plum
Holcus Spicatus	—	—	Spiked Holcus
Celtis Orientalis	—	—	Oriental Nettle Tree
Mimosa Aquatica	—	—	Aquatic Mimosa
Sagrus Raffia	not classed	—	Madag. Sagrus
Spilanthus Acmillia	—	—	Acmillia
Xyanthochymus Pictorius	—	—	Colouring Xanthochymus

## CHAP. XXIV.

*Honey—Oils—Gums and Resins—Metals—Minerals and Mineral Waters—Precious Stones.*

**I**N the woods are found six different kinds of honey, the general name for which is *voa* ; each of these are deposited by different insects. One of them, called *Tentele sacondre*, is supposed to be the Arabian Tabaxir, which is held in great estimation in the East. It is deposited by a fly called Sacondre; on the leaves of certain shrubs, and is found in small yellow, green, and red lumps: it is very sweet and hard, and is more of the nature of sugar than honey.

Of oils there are not less than eight or ten different kinds extracted from plants: the general name for these is Menach; and they are adapted to the various purposes of life. The natives make much use of oils in anointing their bodies; in those warm climates where clothing is in a great degree dispensed with, the action of the sun renders the use of unguents agreeable at least; and if not necessary to preserve the skin from blistering, they certainly impart a freshness and suppleness, that gives a degree of vigour to the frame. Those oils most in use amongst them are the *tanhe-tanhe*, which is drawn from the Palma Christi, or Ricinus; the Menachil, extracted from the

seed of Sesame, great quantities of which are made in the vale of Amboule, and it is used for anointing the body; Apocapouc, which is a strong poison, but used for the hair; and an oil extracted from the raven-sara, which partakes of the united perfumes of cloves, cinnamon, and nutmegs. The cooks in India prefer this perfume, in preference to all other spices, in ragouts. It is expressed from the leaves of the plants. The rest are called according to the respective plants from which they are obtained, Ouivan, Mafouta, Vourave, Vintang, Arame, &c.

Several sorts of gum and resin are found on this island, called by the common name of Lite, which is always prefixed to each sort. Of these, there is the Minta, or Gum Benzoin; the Rame, or Tacamahaca; Simpi, an odoriferous gum exuding from the tree Simpi; Enfouraha, a green gum of a balsamic odour, from the Fouraha; Quizomainthi, a black gum made use of in fixing darts in their handles; Lingue, likewise, a black gum of great fragrancy; Minthsi, also a black gum, viscous, but very brittle: it exudes from a species of the Acacia, or locust-tree, which grows in the province of Manghabei: the women make use of it in painting their faces, and it is very healing in wounds and ulcers. Vitsic, a species of gum made by ants, in the province of Ampatre; it is white, and hangs on the branches of the trees:—its inside is mixed with small ants, and it is made use of to fix the darts. Fanolouc is a musk which is taken from an animal of the size of a cat. Varahanga is a

gum which yields an odour like that of incense. *Liturha* is dragon's-blood. *Barencoco* is another species of dragon's-blood. *Pane* is a gum, or yellow resin, extremely fragrant, from a tree called *Fane*. *Vahonlitintong* is the juice of the tree *Vintang*, or *Aloe*. *Haronga* is a yellow gum which exudes from a tree, the flowers of which yield the sweetest matter for honey. Gum lac and ambergris are also found here, and the gum-elastic (*Gummiphora Madagascariensis*) which is drawn by incision from the tree *Finguiera*. This possesses all the properties of the *Caout-chouc* of *Cayenne*. Spirit of wine has no effect on it, but it may be dissolved in ether or linseed-oil: the natives make torches of it, and it requires no wick.

A gum, similar to gum-arabic, is taken from a tree called the *Ombave*.

A resin of the substance of ambergris, is exuded from a tree called *Tongoo-hintchi*.

*Civet* is plentiful, and is taken from the civet-cat: musk is also taken from the crocodile; and the natives call it *Tartave*.

The metals found at Madagascar are gold, silver, copper, steel, and iron. Of gold there are three sorts; first, the country gold, called *Malacassa*: this is of a different nature to that made use of in Europe, being pale, and as soft as lead: an ounce of it is reckoned at about forty-five shillings of our money. There are mines of it in *Anossy* and other parts of the island: it is of three kinds;—the finest, called *Liteharonga*;



the second, Voulomenefoutchi; the third, Abetslavau. The other two kinds of gold are imported; one from Mecca, called Voulameneraaca; this was brought by the Rohandrians, and is good and fine:—the third kind is that brought thither by the French, and is called Voulomen-voutouva.

It is at present a doubtful matter whether there are any silver mines in Madagascar; yet, the authority of three different writers may be quoted in confirmation of it; namely, Ossorio, Drury, and Benyowsky. The two first write of silver mines in the inland and mountainous parts of the country; and the latter, of that metal being found at Angontzi. Drury also mentions a white metal like tin, which he calls Tutaneg. Like the gold, what silver is found in the island, is principally used as ornaments: their trade being carried on by barter, they have no circulating medium;—that which they sometimes receive of Europeans in exchange for slaves, is immediately returned in the purchase of such commodities as are wanted, or melted down and converted into rings, bracelets, &c.

The existence of copper mines is of the same doubtful nature as that of silver, and at present rests on the authority of Benyowsky, who assures us that mines of that metal are found near the bay of Antongil.

Mines of steel and iron are found throughout the island, and the manufacture of them constitutes their most esteemed employment. The quality of the iron

in some of the provinces is excellent, and differs but little from steel : the best is found in Amboule, Anossi, Matatane, and Manghabei. Steel abounds most in Mahafalle, Anachimoussi, Ivouronhehoc, Icondre, and Manamboul. Specimens of their iron have been brought to Europe and examined by competent men, who have found it not at all inferior to that of Sweden.

Very little is known at present of the minerals at Madagascar ; except salt, saltpetre, sulphur, and pitch, which, in fact, have presented themselves to view, no others have been proved to exist. Salt is made there in large quantities in different districts, and is universally used by the natives to season, but not to cure their meat. Salt springs are found in many parts of the island ; there is one on a mountain near the valley of Amboule, sixty miles from the coast, which is so strongly impregnated, that a considerable quantity of salt is made from its waters.

Salt-petre is found in many caverns in the provinces of Houlouve and Ivouronhehoc, and in great quantities ; insomuch, that Flacourt says he could have manufactured enough gunpowder from it to have conquered the whole island with a handful of men. The natives at that period knew little of the use of the latter destructive composition ; and if they have not already been taught how to manufacture it, we hope they will for ever remain ignorant on the subject.

Towards the east of Mount Hiela, are rivulets so strongly impregnated with sulphur, that the waters are white with it, and both the smell and taste correspond thereto. In Manghasia a spring is found which produces that species of pitch called *Pis-asphaltum*, or *Bitumen Judaicum*.

There is also a fountain on the top of a mountain at Dombulombe, whose water is impregnated with copperas so strongly that it is highly poisonous.

Several hot springs are found in different parts, possessing medicinal qualities; and chalybeate waters are common on almost every mountain.

A great variety of precious stones are found in the rivers and brooks of Madagascar, such as crystals, topazes, granates, amethysts, eagle-stones, emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths, jaspers, blood-stones, (called by the natives Rhahamanga), cornelians, and touchstones. The native goldsmiths manufacture these into various ornaments. Large masses of rock crystal are found in the provinces of Mananhar, and on the Ambohitsmena, some of which contain shirls, fossils, and other extraneous bodies of value.

## APPENDIX.

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## APPENDIX.

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OF the several particulars in the history of barbarous nations, Religion is decidedly the most interesting to a reflecting mind—inasmuch as it involves consequences the most important both in respect to the present and future condition of man. It is a concern between the creature, who is a changeable being, and the Creator, who is immutable; and the different effects resulting from truth and error are so immensely important, that it is of the first consequence for him to be set right in this particular.

It is true, that the unerring pages of Inspiration, which have presented us with a faithful picture of man in all the stages and conditions of his existence, inform us that the Creator of the universe has made provision for the moral government and future felicity of those who do not enjoy the light of revelation—that he has imparted to them, as well as others, an internal principle, which, if rightly attended to, is sufficient to regulate their private actions, and to guide them in their conduct towards their fellow-creatures; and we are allowed charitably to believe that a moral heathen, who has never enjoyed the advantages of revelation, but who conscientiously honours God by acting up to that light which he possesses, will not be excluded from a participation of future happiness.

Nor can we believe that the extent of that principle is so confined as the practice of savage nations in general would seem to indicate, or that its dictates and remonstrances are so weak and uncertain, as to leave them at

full liberty to practise the grossest of crimes, without suffering the infliction of self-condemnation:—on the contrary, we are inclined to think, that, so far from barbarity, murder, and adultery, being standard virtues with them, as some have asserted,—in such actions, (however frequently they may occur,) they act contrary to the convictions of conscience, and consequently are amenable to the just judgment of God. Their frequency only proves that the principles of evil in the human heart are so strong, as to get the better of conscience and judgment.

Thus far, *but no farther*, are we disposed to go with those who question or deny the propriety of missionary exertions: for it is not enough that the principle we refer to exists—there must also be a corresponding power in the moral constitution of man to obey its dictates, in order to insure his future happiness; which power the history of the world, in all ages, convinces us, does not exist in man in a state of nature, in a sufficient degree to overcome his corrupt propensities, which by a long course of indulgence so effectually gain the ascendancy, as to blunt the power of conscience and render its dictates uncertain or erroneous. We KNOW this to be the case, both from the word of God and the illustrations which every day's experience presents to our notice, even amongst those who are supposed to be under the general influence of Christianity.

Nor is this all:—the universal prevalence of moral evil is so clear, that even the heathens are sensible of the necessity of some atonement; and mistaking the nature and attributes of Deity, believe that the more costly the sacrifice, the more acceptable it will prove, and the more effectually will it atone for their sins; and to this principle may be ascribed the horrid sacrifices we read of in the history of barbarous nations.

Before the introduction of Christianity into the world, the relative duties were not fully understood: the exercise

of benevolence and humanity was confined to the *friendly* circle; and the duty of extending the application of these, and even of love itself, to our enemies, was a refinement in morals, and required a purity of sentiment, that was unknown under the Patriarchal or Mosaic dispensation. It was in the school of the Redeemer of mankind that this principle was inculcated and enforced; and although its influence is not so perceptible as it should be amongst Christians and Christian nations,—yet, its dissemination has softened the asperity of those evils that are still latent, and drawn closer the ties of universal kindred.

But, in the ages of which we are speaking, it was not only in the sphere of relative obligations that we find practices allowed, that are totally inconsistent with Christianity. If we look at the social circle, we shall find many circumstances which will oblige us to conclude, that the moral capacities of man were not all unfolded at once; or rather, that they were not in so high a degree acted upon by the spirit of God at that period, as under the Christian dispensation. Indeed, the state of society in the patriarchal ages was such as to justify and even render necessary many things that afterwards became highly criminal. Of these are, the marriage of the nearest relations—the plurality of wives, and their frequent repudiation on slight grounds; the latter of which is accounted for by our Saviour himself, while with the same breath he forbids the practice of it in future.\* The Almighty Lawgiver of the universe has adapted his revelations to the circumstances of his creatures; and at various periods, distinctly pointed out in the Holy Scriptures, has *extended* the scale of moral obligations as the state of man would bear it, until, at length, it has been perfected by the introduction of Christianity, or the revelation of Jesus Christ.†

Christians are not sufficiently alive to the benefits, both

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\* See Matt. xix. 3—9.

† Heb. i. 1.



of a positive and *negative* nature, that they derive from their religion—of the principles, the dispositions, and the habits that have been, in a manner, *rooted out* by its *general* influence, as well as those which have been inculcated and imbibed by its *particular* application.—To go no further, if we look over the scripture history of the early ages of the world, we shall find that, even under the influence of revelation, actions and habits were allowed its votaries, the bare contemplation of which the Christian seeks to avoid; and, as it regards the history of the Jews, the utter extermination of those heathen tribes, who opposed them, or occupied the spot which was the subject of promise, was commanded by divine authority\*; however little they may have been justified in aggravating their sufferings by unnecessary acts of cruelty in the execution of those commands. It is the glory of the Bible, that it not only relates to us the *obedience* of the servants of God, but also their failings and vices—not that we should imitate the latter, but rather to convey a lesson of instruction to future generations by contrasting their different effects.

We flatter ourselves the reader will not deem the foregoing remarks irrelevant or misplaced, when he recollects that in concluding our account of the origin of the Madagasscs, we left them under the impression that they were immediately descended from the ancient patriarch; and having been completely insulated, and thereby separated from the rest of the world for a long series of ages, were excluded from the advantages of revelation, and yet have maintained their primitive faith and the simple worship connected therewith. Not having met with any account which appears to us more probable, it is our intention to consider them in this state; having the concurrent opinion

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\* The wars of the Jews and Canaanites were undoubtedly struggles for existence: and had not the former been enabled, by divine aid, to overcome and exterminate their idolatrous enemies, they would have been exterminated by them, and thus the fulfilment of the promises would have been frustrated.

of the earliest authentic writers on the subject, who had an opportunity of examining them before their manners, and, we might add, their *morals*, had been tainted by the pernicious intercourse with Europeans.\*

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, after the discovery and conquest of the Western Continent had taken place, two prevailing passions held possession of the mind of the European nations—a desire to discover new countries—and a zeal for the Catholic religion, and the extirpation of heretics. In those days of Papal tyranny, the Jesuits possessed almost unbounded influence; and the spirit of proselytism which distinguished their profession was so strong, as to cause them literally “to compass sea and land” to gratify it. With the exception of England and the Dutch provinces, Europe had long been enslaved by them; and if the latter had succeeded in emancipating herself from the iron yoke, it was in a great measure effected by the countenance she received from England; for, notwithstanding the noble resistance she made to the attempts to force a false religion upon her, she must, in all human probability, have sunk at last, but for their assistance.

The zeal of the Catholics, however, took an entirely new direction, upon the discoveries which were made in the East and West; and a field was opened, which presented so boundless a prospect for its exercise, as made them quite impatient to begin the cultivation. Accordingly we find them, at the very first onset, endeavouring to plant the Catholic faith in the new world; and, in the true spirit of Popery, rushing furiously forward, with the cross in one hand, and the sword in the other, (for we hear nothing of the *Bible* at that period,) to extirpate heresy; signifying, by these emblems, that when the former failed, the latter must be brought into exercise.

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\* See Preface to Flacourt, p. 2.

The Portuguese, as we have observed before, were the first who attempted to colonize Madagascar; and it might reasonably be supposed, that a people so devoted to the Catholic faith, would have planted the standard of the cross immediately;—but this was not the case. They took priests thither, it is true; but their efforts to convert the natives were feeble to an unaccountable degree; and the massacre of the whole colony, (except five men,) which took place about the year 1545, alarmed them so much, that they abandoned the idea of settling there, and no further attempt was made by them to establish the Catholic faith.

It was about a century after, that the French fixed their colony at Fort Dauphin, at which period no vestige of Christianity remained in the island. A short time previous, a Portuguese vessel, which touched there, had carried off the son of a chief, who was taken to Goa, where he was instructed in reading and writing, and initiated in the mysteries of catholicism; but after his return to Madagascar, he renounced Christianity, and again adopted the religion and customs of his forefathers; so that, when the French arrived, they found him with his lamba and his assagaye, quite ready to receive them. The field, therefore, was now open to the French; and if there was any glory in converting men from natural religion to popish idolatry, they had a fair chance of reaping it.

They found that simple people of a very teachable disposition, and resolved to avail themselves of it without delay. They appear, indeed, to have been under great apprehensions lest the English and Dutch heretics should get the start of, or supersede them.\* Their first care was

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\* Flacourt writes so movingly upon this subject, that one would almost suspect him to have been a monk. He intreats the French government to send "good pastors and workmen, to secure the flocks before the wolves be entered into the fold, and have devoured the sheep." And in order to assist these good pastors in their labours of love, he strongly recommends the "build-

to build chapels, and to establish public worship; the novelty of which proceedings attracted the admiration of the natives, who flocked in crowds to view them, and testified a great deal of zeal in imitating the devotions of the French worshippers. They also brought their children by hundreds to be baptized, and intreated the missionaries to impart to them the knowledge requisite to prepare themselves for that sacrament.\*

These outward testimonies of conversion, however, though great stress is laid on them by the French writers, were not followed by that evidence which must be looked for as alone sufficient, in the view of man at least, to determine its reality—a corresponding course of life. Indeed the conduct of the French themselves was of the most flagitious description; and when contrasted with the austerity of the Catholic religion, must render the latter not a little paradoxical to the natives. A very high system of morals certainly could not be expected from the colonists; for the manner in which they were got together was such, as that a good moral character would scarcely associate himself with them. Thus, when it was necessary to plant a colony on any newly-acquired territory, the prisons and the streets were swept, and a cargo of vice and depravity, with a few monks to complete the set, were shipped off to the new station; and these were the kind of embassies that were to disseminate the true faith! A change of climate, however, did not affect their character: if they possessed so little restraint over their bad passions at home, where the inducement was strongest, it was not probable, that when they found themselves at liberty in a country where a laxity of morals universally prevailed, they should all at once become reformed. The French,

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ing some *good forts*, and keeping a pretty numerous body of troops;" for which advice he gives two reasons:—the opposition of heretical strangers, such as the English and Dutch, and that of the native chiefs!!

\* This result, it is to be understood, is taken from the French accounts.

in this instance before us, gave themselves up to every species of debauchery and excess ; seizing the wives and daughters of the natives, and carrying off their cattle and goods.

With such pernicious examples before their eyes, the natives, who were not idiots, concluded that whatever these new teachers might profess, the religion they were so anxious to communicate did not restrain its European vetaries from the commission of acknowledged crimes ; and therefore it was too much for them to expect, that *they* should be obliged, all at once, to renounce the customs and habits which their forefathers had practised.

When Fernandez Navarette\* visited the island, which was in 1647, he found the morals, both of the French and the native convents, in a very relaxed state ; and asserted, that out of a thousand of the latter who had been baptized, there were not fifty who lived like christians. Navarette was a good catholic, and complains bitterly of the licentious conduct of the French and Portuguese who resided at Madagascar, and who laughed at him and the other Spaniards for "eating *offal meat* on Saturdays." He was, notwithstanding, obliged to go on shore, and to associate with these reprobates ; for it seems his own countrymen, who composed the ship's crew, were not much before-hand with them : their riotous conduct disturbed him so much, that there was not a place in the whole ship where he could repeat his "Ave Marias in peace." He speaks handsomely of Pronis, who was then governor, calling him a "very saint." This is also the character given of him by his successor, Flacourt, who describes him as a "very good ecclesiastic, though but a moderate governor."

The exertions made by the French priests, at the period of Navarette's visit, appear to have been considerable.

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\* This person was a Superior of the order of St. Dominic, and was sent out by the court of Spain, on a mission to some of the Indian islands, to which he was on his passage when he touched at Madagascar.

There were on the establishment at that time, one bishop, three missionaries, and two lay brethren; they had erected a church or chapel, and near it a monastery, for these ecclesiastics, in which was a good library of books. Pronis himself too, was very zealous for the conversion of these poor heathens; and having married a native woman, the daughter of one of the chiefs, might be supposed to have possessed some influence over their minds: but the effect was trifling, beyond the mere submission to the rite of baptism. The French had not been there long before they shewed themselves disposed to exercise a spirit of tyranny and domination, and the natives became disgusted. The writer we have above quoted, assures his readers that they would never "improve in either temporals or spirituals till they be subdued."

Notwithstanding these things, there does not exist a doubt but that the natives were desirous of acquiring a knowledge of true religion; and, if an effort had been made with a proper Spirit to introduce Christianity—if, instead of carrying fire and sword through the provinces, and frightening the natives into obedience to the faith, they had proceeded in the true temper of the gospel, using no other weapons than the sword of the Spirit, and no other arguments than those of persuasion and scripture, Madagascar might at this period have presented a very different picture to the civilized world. Every thing connected with the moral state of these people was favourable to such an enterprise. They were wholly without a knowledge of revealed religion, consequently their minds presented a sort of blank, ready to receive the first impressions. Mahometanism, indeed, had been introduced by the Arabs, and with it a spurious account of some of the historical parts of the Scriptures.\* But Mahometanism was not a religion likely to gain ground amongst these simple people;

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\* Page 66.

its very first principle being contrary to the high and reverential ideas they entertain of the Divine Being:—we refer to the familiar conversations which it is pretended Mahomet held with God, and upon which the whole imposture is founded; but such is the awe of the Madegasses towards that Being, that they believe him too great to hold converse with the greatest of earthly monarchs.\*

Independent of this, they felt no great attachment to their own simple ritual. The absurdities of the Ombiasses, the only persons who bore a sacred character amongst them, were believed only by the lower classes of the people. The chiefs, it is true, consulted them; but it was rather with the view of keeping the people in subjection, than from a conviction of their supernatural powers. Nor are the Olis, or Teraphim, more generally regarded, or believed to possess any extraordinary powers. This is asserted by Flacourt, Drury, and several later writers. The first, speaking on this subject, says, “the most superstitious in this respect were Dian Machicore, Dian Isissei, and some other Rhoandrians, some Lohavohits and slaves. *All do not entertain such a belief—the generality of them despise it, and give it no credit whatever.*”†

Nor was it the least important circumstance, that the utmost liberty of conscience was enjoyed there by every one, which did not result so much from an indifference to religion, as to an absence of the spirit of intolerance. On the contrary, they were at all times ready to hear what every stranger had to say on this subject, and weighed

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\* Drury, p. 460.

† Flacourt, p. 182; Drury, p. 177. The latter honest but ignorant writer, gives a ludicrous account of his attempt to instruct his master in the Scripture History of the Creation; but being a very moderate theologian, he got well laughed at for his pains. He was heard with great patience and attention, till he roundly asserted *that all men have a rib more on one side than on the other!* This produced an investigation, which turning out of course to his disadvantage, his whole account was treated with ridicule.

well the merits of their arguments, manifesting a consciousness of the deficiency of their own system, and a desire to arrive at the truth. This desire is inherent in the mind of man, and the nearer he approaches to the simplicity of nature, the more strongly is it felt, and the more susceptible is he of its instantaneous impression. It is when the mind is carried away by the pride of reasoning, and the sophistry of argument, that it is found to oppose itself to the dictates of truth; which being capable of illustration by a natural and concise process, requires no embellishment to set it off. Thus we find the French met with no difficulties, but those which resulted from their own violent and imprudent conduct, which, however, were sufficient to counteract their designs.

Immediately after Flacourt returned to France, he made a strong appeal to the then French minister, Fouquet, upon the subject of the colony, and particularly relative to religion: and we are led to suppose that his representations were not without effect. Although we have not met with any account of the precise nature of his second voyage, or of the persons whom he took out with him, it is reasonable to conclude that he obtained the supplies that he requested, and amongst the rest a number of ecclesiastics. Indeed, in the dedication of his work, which was in all probability written after he had received his letters patent, he expressly alludes to such a provision. But his intentions, and those of the good priests who accompanied him, were frustrated by the wreck of the vessel, and the destruction of every soul on board, as we have before stated.

Chamargou was the next governor, and after his arrival some considerable exertions were made by the French to establish the "true faith" once more on the island; but, like the former attempts, they were ill-conducted and did not succeed; nor would any system have succeeded, whose advocates had arrogated to themselves a dominion



over the consciences of the natives, unless supported by such a military power as would render resistance in vain. There is a principle in human nature strongly opposed to such an assumption; and when once its injustice comes to be well understood, every noble feeling of the heart is called into exercise in support of its rights. This spiritual domination is the very essence of Popery, which it has evinced in every age since the world has been cursed with its baneful influence. Nor is it possible that its assumption of it should cease, for then it would cease to be Popery.

We have related, in the history of Chamargou's government, the disastrous consequences of the imprudent conduct of Father Stephen, who, it appears, was at the head of the mission at Madagascar. This conduct caused the destruction of all the missionaries except one\*; and excited the utter detestation of the natives against the French. Under these circumstances, it was not probable that any attempt to *convert* them would be attended with success. During the time Chamargou remained on the island, the colonists were engaged in a series of warfare that was ill calculated to promote such views; and although nothing occurs in history on the subject, we have no doubt but that upon the subsequent expulsion of the French, those natives, who were considered as converts, returned, like Andian Maroarive,† to their former religious and civil habits; congratulating themselves at having escaped as well from the fangs of a bigotted priestcraft, as from the lawless tyranny of despotic invaders.

The entire destruction of the colony, after the death of Chamargou and departure of Bretesche, appears to have put an end to all idea on the part of the French to christianize Madagascar. The island, indeed, was deserted by them till towards the middle of the last century, when the

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\* See pp. 142, 144.

† See p. 124.

slave-trade had begun to make its ravages on the morals and the population; and, if the desire existed, it would have been preposterous to have made any attempt of the kind.\* Thus, for a century and a half, were those people destitute of religious instruction, although, year after year, the fleets of the most powerful and enlightened nations of the world were continually touching upon their coasts. The period, however, which was destined by Providence for the bestowment of those two great blessings, religious instruction and personal freedom, upon the Madagassses, at length arrived. We have already endeavoured to give the reader a faithful detail of the means by which the latter was accomplished, and we have now before us the pleasing task of pointing out the circumstances which led to the introduction of the former.

In the year 1795, a few pious and benevolent individuals, actuated by strong feelings of commiseration for the state of the heathen world, established a society for the purpose of sending missionaries to different parts of the globe to instruct the natives in the knowledge of true religion. It is not our intention to give a history of "the London Missionary Society," the name by which it is now generally known; but as this work may possibly be read by many who are not acquainted with the nature of this institution, with which also the present introduction of Christianity into Madagascar has originated, we trust the reader will excuse us if we so far digress from our subject, as to state the principles on which it is founded, and give a short account of those events which led to the result we are writing of.

The London Missionary Society was established on the

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\* If any Catholic missionaries visited the island, it must have been in a private way, as no mention is made of them in history. But it is more than probable, that the fate of Father Stephen and his associates was a sufficient damper to their zeal, and that the poor Madagassses were henceforth placed on the incorrigible list.

broad foundation of Christianity, without any reference to party distinctions. The founders, who were of different denominations of Christians, were men of enlarged and liberal minds; and the principle we have stated was evidently the only one by which they were actuated, being precisely *that* upon which their missionaries have uniformly proceeded in their respective spheres:—with the Bible in their hands, and looking up to God for assistance, they have gone forth in the true spirit of the Gospel, to preach amongst the Heathen “the unsearchable riches of Christ.”

Notwithstanding this, the Society has had much opposition to contend with in the first years of its existence. However respectable, both in character and property, the individuals were who constituted its lists of directors, they were looked upon as enthusiastic visionaries, who were <sup>^</sup>throwing away valuable lives, and the property entrusted to them, to no beneficial purpose;—and, as it respected the British colonies in the East, to a very bad one; for it was a question which occupied the attention of the British government during a considerable time, whether the Society’s missionaries should be allowed to proceed thither; a large proportion of those concerned in India affairs being decidedly of opinion, that not only would *no good* be effected by such an admission, but that any interference with the religious superstitions of the eastern nations, would be attended with consequences prejudicial at least, if not utterly destructive, to the British interests in that part of the world.

But it was not from hence alone that the opposition proceeded: there was another class of men, whose conduct was calculated in a still greater degree to damp the zeal of the directors, had not a superior and unseen Power sustained their minds, and *impelled* them to go forward. We refer to the negative, but cutting opposition of the friends of Christianity, who asserted or believed that the time for the conversion of the heathen was not arrived. We have

lived long enough to recollect hearing such assertions as these uttered by men, who, in other respects, were strongly devoted to the cause of religion, especially after the Providence of God had appeared for a while to frown on the labours of the Society; and we think we may venture to assert, that one such remark from *such* men inflicted greater distress on the mind of the directors, than all the combined opposition that presented itself on the former grounds.

The day of misconception and calumny, however, is gone by. A steady adherence to those principles, on which the Society was originally founded, has, by divine assistance, enabled it to surmount every obstacle of that nature. The British government wisely determined not to interfere to prevent the introduction of the Christian religion in India; and so well satisfied are they at the present period, that the views of the Society are calculated to promote the happiness of mankind, that in every place under their dominion, they have not only admitted the missionaries, but extended over them their powerful protection, and rendered such facilities, as greatly to promote the objects of the institution.

In regard to the friends of religion, they have long since seen and acknowledged their error, and have endeavoured to atone for their former want of zeal, by the most strenuous co-operation: and at the present period, the whole christian world is engaged, either to this, or some other societies of the same nature; and the efforts to disseminate the Christian religion, are great beyond all former precedent.

In the year 1798, the Society determined to attempt the establishment of a mission in South Africa, and the Rev. Nathaniel Forsyth was sent to the Cape of Good Hope for that purpose. The same year the friends of the institution received an invaluable acquisition to their numbers, in the late Dr. Vander Kemp. That gentleman, after his conversion, had his attention strongly

engaged, at the time of the formation of the Society, by a printed tract on the subject, which had been circulated in Germany, and was put into his hands by a Moravian minister. So deeply moved and affected was he by that and subsequent publications on the subject, that at the above period he wrote to the directors a letter expressive of the feelings of his heart, and making a tender of his services. These were accepted, and he arrived in London, where his valuable qualities were soon discovered; and it was finally determined that, according to his own earnest wishes, he should be sent as a missionary to the *Namaquas*, a race of people inhabiting the countries on each side the Orange River in South Africa.

From the first moment of his arrival at the place of destination, it appears he had it in contemplation to pass over to Madagascar, as soon as the views of the directors would admit of such an undertaking. He had indeed set his heart on making an attempt to introduce Christianity into "that great and long-neglected island;" and in his letters made many strong appeals to the directors on the subject. We understand, also, that the latter were quite as desirous of such an undertaking; but their affairs in the South Seas, in India, and on the Continent of Africa, occupied all their resources, and they were unwillingly obliged to defer it.

After the surrender of the Mauritius to the British forces, a favourable opening presenting itself, Dr. Vander Kemp was anxious to avail himself of it; and Mr. Pacalt, a German missionary, declared himself willing to accompany him on a mission to Madagascar. Sir John Craddock, the governor at the Cape, was, in consequence, applied to for his consent, which was readily granted; and about the same time the Doctor received a letter from a Mr. Thompson, who was on his passage as a missionary to the East, and having touched at the Mauritius, communicated to him from thence, intelligence highly favourable to the enterprize.

The directors, however, were averse to Dr. K.'s going thither, both on account of his health, which was on the decline, and because they had now a considerable number of missionaries on the Continent of Africa, which rendered it absolutely necessary for them to have "a wise and judicious superintendant." Circumstances also occurred, which suspended the benevolent object of the Doctor's wishes, till, at the end of the year 1811, he was called away by death, to receive the reward of his labours.

After Dr. Vander Kemp's decease, it appears Mr. Pacalt relinquished his design of proceeding to Madagascar, and nothing further transpired on the subject for some years. The directors, however, never lost sight of that object: it was one of too much importance to be finally relinquished. It is true but little was known respecting the island, and that little was not very encouraging. The extent to which the slave-trade was carried on, made the attempt appear hazardous; and the savage character which its inhabitants bore in Europe, was an additional obstacle in the way. The intercourse, however, which we have already stated to have been kept up between Governor Farquhar and the King of Ova, paved the way, and eventually led, to the accomplishment of their wishes.

In the year 1816, two missionaries were sent to the Mauritius, where they were kindly received by his Excellency, Governor Farquhar, under whose auspices they soon established themselves, and commenced their active labours.

The successful result of this mission induced the directors of the Society, two years after, to send two more missionaries (namely, the Rev. David Jones, and the Rev. Thomas Bevan) to the Mauritius, with the ulterior intention of their proceeding to Madagascar, if the state of that island were such as to render it safe, which they had been encouraged to hope was the case, from communications which were received from Governor Farquhar. These

missionaries sailed on the 9th of February, and arrived at the place of their destination on the 3d of July, 1818. At that period, Governor Farquhar had returned to England on business respecting the affairs of the colony, and had left Mr. Hall in command during his absence. That gentleman received the missionaries in a very courteous manner; but discouraged their proceeding to Madagascar at that time, on account of the slave-trade, which still continued to be carried on to a most alarming extent. They, notwithstanding, determined to proceed thither privately, to inform themselves precisely of the state of the island, and whether their attempt would be likely to succeed.

They accordingly sailed from the Mauritius about five weeks after their arrival, and landed at Tamatave on the 18th of August. Here they were favourably received, and commenced a school, consisting, at first, of ten children of the most respectable families in the place. The natives expressed great joy at the prospect of having their children educated; and the missionaries were much encouraged by the promising appearances which presented themselves. The following month Mr. and Mrs. Bevan returned to the Mauritius, on account of the approach of the sickly season; leaving Mr. and Mrs. Jones, with their infant child, at Madagascar.

A most painful visitation of Providence took place soon after this period. In December, both Mr. and Mrs. Jones were taken ill: in the same month they lost their infant daughter; and, at the close of it, Mrs. Jones also died, to the inexpressible grief of her husband.—Nor was this all. At the same period, Mr. and Mrs. Bevan, who had remained some weeks at the Mauritius, determined to return to Madagascar, notwithstanding the earnest intreaties of their friends, who represented the danger of going at that period of the year.

They arrived, with their infant, at Tamatave, on the

6th of January, 1819, and were immediately informed of the distressing events which had transpired. Mr. B. was strongly affected at it, and was himself soon after taken ill, and died on the 31st of January, having seen his child expire several days before. Overwhelmed with so rapid an accumulation of sorrow, Mrs. Bevan, who had been taken ill a few days after her husband, sunk under the weight, and expired on the 3d of February.

Such a complication of bereavements must have weighed down the spirits and constitution of the survivor, Mr. Jones, if his mind had not been strongly fortified by religion. Under the influence of this all-powerful principle, he found himself supported; and resolved, if it should please God to spare his life, to continue his labours until other missionaries arrived to assist him. He found the Madegasses eager to receive instruction, and he was unwilling to forego the pleasure of imparting it.

With these views he remained; and at the latter end of the year 1819, the directors, who had become acquainted with the melancholy events which had taken place, sent the Rev. David Griffith, to occupy the place of their late missionary, Mr. Bevan. That gentleman, with Mrs. Griffith, arrived at the Mauritius in January, 1820, and were kindly received by the Friends in that island, amongst whom must be reckoned as chief, the worthy governor, who allowed him the use of his library, in which was a collection of vocabularies of the language, and memoirs of the island of Madagascar. These were of essential service to Mr. Griffith in preparing himself for his undertaking. The encouragement and support which Governor Farquhar has uniformly given to all the missionaries who have been at the Mauritius, do honour to his head as well as his heart, and cannot fail to make the deepest impression on the mind of every one who feels an interest in the welfare of the human race.

At this period, Mr. Jones, who was at the Mauritius for



the benefit of his health, employed himself in superintending a school, consisting of sixty children, who made a rapid improvement under his instruction. It was his object to expand and inform the understandings, rather than to load the memories of his pupils, by imparting just ideas, and enforcing them by the plainest illustrations. This is evidently the most certain method of instilling knowledge into children, whose capacities are necessarily confined: and to burthen their memories continually with fresh matter, without explanation or illustration, tends only to confuse and weary them, without advancing a step nearer the great object in view.

During the time Mr. Jones remained at the Mauritius, he experienced the most kind and unremitting attention from his Excellency, Governor Farquhar, and Charles Telfair, Esq.; by whose assiduity he was once more restored to perfect health, and prepared to resume his labours at Madagascar, in conjunction with his colleague, the Rev. Mr. Griffith. An opportunity of the most favourable nature presented itself of obtaining an introduction at the court of Radama, when Mr. Hastie proceeded thither to treat for the abolition of the slave-trade, and of this Mr. Jones determined to avail himself. Of his arrival and journey to the capital, the reader is already informed. The reception he met with from Radama, the king of Ova, was highly flattering, and he soon found the benefit of the introduction he had received. Immediately after the affair of the slave-trade had been disposed of, Mr. Jones took an opportunity of conversing with the king on the subject of his mission, the nature of which had been previously explained to him by Mr. Hastie: he therefore assured Mr. Jones that he had nothing so much at heart as the instruction of his people, and requested him to inform the directors of the Missionary Society, that his protection and support should be extended to any missionaries they might think proper to send over.—“ Help me,” said

he, "to enlighten and civilize my subjects, and you will for ever bind me to the British nation." The Queen-Mother also assured Mr. Hastie, that this alone was the basis of the treaty just concluded. "Had money," said she, "been the object, I would never have agreed to it; but I will now support the plan with all my might."

Such sentiments bespeak a true nobility of soul, and must have afforded strong encouragement to the men who had forsaken their earthly connections to dwell amongst strangers, whose characters had been so grossly misrepresented to the world. Mr. Jones, however, took occasion to remind his Majesty, that a letter from himself would have greater weight, and would be more strongly expressive of his wishes. This hint was immediately acted upon; and the following letter was written, in the king's own hand, in the French language:

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"Radama, King of Madagascar, to the Missionary Society, usually called the London Missionary Society.

"GENTLEMEN,

"When the treaty was concluded between me and Governor Farquhar, which had for its object the cessation of the exportation of slaves from the island of Madagascar, the missionary, Mr. David Jones, accompanied the commissioner from the British government, and arrived at Tananarive, the capital of my kingdom, with the intention of paying me a visit to solicit from me leave to settle, with other missionaries, in my dominions. Having informed myself of his profession and mission, I acquiesced with much pleasure in his request.

"Mr. Jones, your missionary, having satisfied me that those sent out by your Society have no other object than to enlighten the people by persuasion and conviction; and to discover to them the means of becoming happy, by evangelizing and civilizing them after the manner of

European nations, and this not by force, contrary to the light of their understandings;

"Therefore, Gentlemen, I request you to send me, if convenient, as many missionaries as you may deem proper, together with their families, if they desire it; *provided* you send skilful artizans to make my people workmen as well as good Christians.

"I avail myself, Gentlemen, of this opportunity to promise all the protection, the safety, the respect, and the tranquillity, which missionaries may require from my subjects.

"The missionaries who are particularly required at present, are persons who are able to instruct my people in the Christian religion, and in various trades, such as weaving, carpentering, &c. &c.

"I shall expect, Gentlemen, from you, a satisfactory answer, by an early opportunity.

"Accept, Gentlemen, the assurances of my esteem and affection.

(Signed)

"RADAMA MANZAKA.

"*Tananarive, October 29, 1820.*"

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This letter, which was brought to England by Prince Rataffe, in the spring of the last year, was read at the general meeting of the Missionary Society, in May, at which the Prince and his young charge were also present. This interesting and novel circumstance acted like an electric shock on the immense multitude who were assembled in the metropolis on that interesting anniversary; and the effect was greatly heightened by the little knowledge the public possessed respecting Madagascar. The letter itself must give every impartial person a favourable opinion of the king, both for his discernment and liberality; and few could have expected to hear such sentiments

from a despotic monarch of a supposed horde of barbarians.

In consequence of this appeal, the directors took under their protection the nine Madegasse youths; and, in answer to the letter of the king, pledged themselves, that missionaries should be sent to instruct the people. Agreeable to this pledge, they, in August following, sent the Rev. Mr. Jefferies, in quality of missionary, and four other persons as mechanics. The Madegasse youths are at present at the British and Foreign School, to receive an education in reading and writing; and when that is accomplished, they are to be placed under proper masters, to be instructed in various trades and manufactures.

To return to the missionaries. At the court of Radama these worthy men have experienced that cordial protection and support which evinces the sincerity of their royal patron. A house has been provided for them, and two servants appointed to attend them. Mr. Jones has had sixteen children placed under his care, by his Majesty, to receive an English education. Three of these are children of his sister, and one of them is heir to the crown; the others are of noble birth, and all possess good understanding and talents. In proof of which, Mr. Jones mentions one, only six years of age, who, after six months' instruction, began to read portions of the Scriptures in English.

In communicating the principles of Christianity, much difficulty is experienced for want of words in their language to express ideas on those subjects. This appears, indeed, to be a difficulty with adults, as well as with children; but the introduction of the English language, which is now to be taught and spoken instead of the French\*, will facilitate the object.

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\* We do not mean to infer from this, that the *French language* does not possess terms to express evangelical sentiments; but *we must* infer from the ignorance of those Madegasses who understand that language, that they had never heard the subject discussed, and that no attempts had been made to impart it to them.

These transactions did not take place without attracting the observations of the French Catholics at the Isle of Bourbon. That the English heretics should have thus gained the favour of a monarch, in a country which a few years ago was frequented by themselves alone, could not fail to alarm them. Accordingly we find the French priest, (we suppose the *Superior*) at St. Denis, in that island, wrote a very flattering letter to the king of Ova, requesting permission to send Catholic missionaries to instruct his subjects in the Roman Catholic religion; and informing him that there were a number of them at Bourbon, ready to come over as soon as they had received his Majesty's permission." But the "English heretics" had, indeed, got the start of them, and the king wrote a very spirited answer, assuring them in the strongest terms that he "would never give his permission to such an interference—that he had entered into an alliance with the British nation, and, consequently, wished to have British protestant missionaries to instruct his subjects, and that such only should have his permission, as well as protection, throughout his dominions."

We cannot here refrain from expressing our indignation at the meddling conduct of these monks. Their government, after having held partial possession of the island for upwards of a century, during which their political and religious tyranny alienated from them the affections of the natives, and ultimately caused their violent expulsion,—had traded with them for another century and a half, during which no attempts had been made to enlighten or civilize them, or to convey religious instruction to their minds. While the French were allowed to partake of the profits of the most iniquitous trade that ever disgraced human nature, the moral state of these islands was of no consequence to them, nor did they make a single effort to christianize them. But as soon as they found that the British were likely to introduce Christianity under another

form than that which they approved, their fears for the souls of the Madegasses were instantly excited, and with it the old superannuated zeal for the prevention of heresy. But as it was in the beginning with Popery, so it is now, and ever will be, as long as it exists. Bigotry and intolerance are its characteristic marks, and it either has not the power, or it takes no pains, to conceal them.

We sincerely rejoice that their proposal met with so prompt and decided a refusal: not because we have any fear that they could have made an impression on the minds of the Madegasses unfavourable to the British, but because the present moral state of the island is such that they might have caused that kind of *religious perplexity* in them, which would have been very unfavourable to the dissemination of christianity. In order to promote such an object amongst any people just emerging from a state of barbarism, it is necessary for the instructors to confine themselves to the plainest and most fundamental truths, and those which are capable of the simplest illustration;\* any other course would, we conceive, fail in its object, and leave them in a worse state of uncertainty than before such things were presented to them.

We are fully persuaded in our own minds, that it was on this ground alone they met with a refusal, and not from the existence of an intolerant spirit on the part of the king. In fact, such a spirit is unknown in Madagascar, if the information of all the travellers who have written on the subject may be depended on; and we are certain that it will not be the object of the missionaries, at present on the island, to infuse it into the minds of that simple people.

The receipt of this letter led to an inquiry on the part of the king, respecting the difference between the Protestant

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\* In Flacourt's work, are the prayers and confessions to the Virgin Mary, St. Michael, John Baptist, &c. &c. with the commands of the church to abstain from flesh on Fridays and Saturdays, and, in short, the whole routine of popish worship and discipline, translated into Madegasse!

and Catholic religion; which gave the missionary an opportunity, after an explanation on that head, of pointing out the principles on which the Missionary Society acted; whose agents used no other means to inculcate their principles, than persuasion and conviction, leaving it entirely to the understandings of their hearers to receive or reject their arguments, according to the light which is thrown into their minds, or the different effects produced thereby.

We have now nearly completed our task, and feel peculiarly happy in the thought of leaving this interesting people in such good hands. The British government, with a liberality which does them honour, have declined interfering with the views and proceedings of the Missionary Society: the care, therefore, of providing for the spiritual wants of these people, as well as of furnishing instructors in the various arts and manufactories, has wholly devolved upon that institution; and, if what has been effected by their exertions in other parts of the world\*, be any guide to us in forming our opinion as to the success of their efforts in Madagascar, there is little doubt but that in a very few years we shall see that island in a state that will excite the admiration and astonishment of all the nations of Europe. That its people are prepared to receive instruction, is the opinion of every one who has been amongst them, from the first moment of its discovery to the present time. There are no prejudices on their minds against revelation; no idolatry; no false principles respecting the unity of God,

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\* We are surprised that the operations of the society, in Africa, have not attracted the attention of the Society of Friends. Surely those who are so eminent for their love of *peace*, cannot look with indifference upon the many instances in which this society has so forcibly and so successfully inculcated that lovely principle! They surely cannot fail to rejoice at seeing the once blood-thirsty *Africaner* and the murdering *Berend* under the same tent, bending their knees at the same throne of grace, and imploring in artless language, the blessings of heaven upon those who have been the instruments of their conversion!

or the immortality of the soul. There is no self-righteous complacency, like that of the Hindoos, to combat, arising from works of supererogation; at the same time, they are not destitute of a knowledge of the universal depravity of the human nature;† and, however preposterous their ideas

† Our learned theologians would little expect to find these poor heathens accounting for the origin of evil—yet such is actually the case. The following tract on the subject, is taken literally from Flacourt, who translated it from a Madegasse MS.

Origin of Sins! Formerly the devil (*dian-bilis*, or *beliche*) was married and had a *very wicked wife*, who brought him seven children; these being grown up to manhood, addicted themselves to vice.

The first gave himself to pride, to despise men, and to a thousand wickednesses—as making poisons, witchcraft, causing hail, rain, whirlwinds, locusts, thunder, and blasting the fruits of the earth. So that although mankind knew who he was, they were obliged to make him a God.

The second was addicted to robbery and plunder, and took great usury, by which he ruined every body.

The third practised all kinds of debauchery and wickedness, carrying off all the women and girls, and ruining them.

The fourth was guilty of vexatious lying and evil-speaking against honest men, by which he excited quarrels, brawls, and private malice; so that the whole world was thereby thrown into confusion and trouble, being sorry when he saw them at peace and repose. When any one was prosperous, he immediately invented against him a thousand calumnies in order to trouble his repose, and ruin his prospects.

The fifth was so addicted to gluttony, that not content with gorging himself, he incited others to do the same by his example, and thus they became bad managers, ran into unnecessary and ruinous expenses, and wasted their substance in ceaseless gluttony and intoxication.

The sixth was so choleric, that on every occasion he killed and massacred every body he met, without any cause; exciting quarrels and fights between men for things of little consequence. By his bad examples, and bad morals, all those have been corrupted who have caused the wars that have taken place on the earth, from the beginning to the present day.

The last was so lazy, that he preferred leaving his lands untilled, rather than cultivating them, and prevailed on many to follow his example. Thus the *Ompilampes*, or wood-robbers, *Ompizees*, or savages, and sluggards, imitate them; the slaves also will neither work nor follow their masters.

The fable ends with the massacre of these wicked youths, at which the devil being very angry, complained to the Divine Being, who told him his



may be on the subject, we look at the *principle* rather than *the detail*; and feel persuaded, that as they admit the principle, they will readily be brought to understand and to feel its application.

Nor do we consider it the least important circumstance in their favour, that a day of rest is universally allowed to the slaves, whether at stated or uncertain intervals. On these days, a total cessation of compulsory labour is admitted; and, although it is at present a purely civil, or rather benevolent appointment, depending upon the will of the master; yet, as we observed in the last case, the *principle* does exist: and when the nature of the Christian sabbath comes to be explained to and understood by them, the transition from a day of rest to a day of activity in the service of God, will meet with no opposition arising from motives of avarice or inhumanity.

But we expect much from the auspicious circumstances under which Christianity has received its introduction into Madagascar. In this view of the subject, we consider the treatment the natives have experienced from Europeans, in former times, as forming so strong a contrast with the conduct of the British at the present period, that the effect must necessarily be great. Hitherto these people have seen the dark side of European character only. In the first instance, when an attempt was made to form an establishment amongst them, whether it was to be of a commercial, a political, or a religious nature, the same means were made use of to enforce it. War and rapine, fire and sword, were employed; and the poor frightened inhabitants, who escaped, were obliged, if proselytism was the object, to submit to the conquerors; and, knowing nothing of the absurdity of popery, thought themselves happy in saving their lives by adopting the idolatrous and preposterous mummery

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*wife was the cause of all the mischief*, and ordered them both to reside in the sea in future. The roaring of the ocean is believed to be nothing less than the devil and his spouse weeping for their children.

that the monks forced upon them. This, however, is not christianizing; and we much question whether the French priests ever effected the conversion of one Madegasse: for if they had, the effects would be seen to this day. Christianity is, indeed, like leaven, and when once introduced in its purity, has the power of the Almighty himself for its protection, and his Holy Spirit for its teacher: and if one native of Madagascar had ever felt the truth of the gospel on his heart, he could not have remained satisfied without communicating it to his countrymen.

And after the French had done with the Madegasses as subjects, or rather, when the latter had done with the former as masters, the case was, if possible, rendered still worse:—then came the slave-trade to blast the morals of the natives and the character of Europeans. War then assumed a new and a more detestable feature amongst the former; for instead of being prosecuted to save their *lives*, they were continually incited to gratify their avarice—a passion which, till that unfortunate era, was scarcely known by them: and Europeans were continually to be seen plotting together, to excite the poor heathens to mutual revenge; that they might thereby gain fresh victims to satisfy the Western Moloch!

Now, let the reader glance his eye over the transactions of the last ten years of the history of this people, and say which is the system that is best calculated to benefit the Madegasses? As soon as British influence was established, its beneficial effect began to be felt; and although we have a high opinion of the discernment of the Madegasses, yet it is no great proof of it that they soon became attached to our countrymen. Instead of plotting for their destruction, the worthy agents of the British government have been laying the most judicious plans for their emancipation and civilization; the accomplishment of their wishes has been already detailed, and the manly and humane manner in which the whole proceeding has been

conducted, has endeared the British nation to the Madagassians. Under these favourable circumstances has Christianity received its introduction, having the patronage of the king and his nobles, not as a matter of court policy, as is too frequently the case in polished nations, but in the honest simplicity and sincerity of their hearts, because they are convinced of its superiority over their present system of religion.\*

We are not ashamed to close our history with the declaration, that we consider the events which we have related, as highly illustrative of the overruling power and providence of God; and we pity the man who, after reading such a chain of striking occurrences, can deliberately ascribe the combination to *chance*, or even place them amongst the ordinary course of human events. We would not, for ten thousand such islands—after the feelings excited by their wrongs are subsided—relinquish the faculty of viewing the painful degradation in which the Madagassians have, for so many years, been sunk, as a sort of *moral discipline*—designed by Providence to prepare them for the reception of that Gospel, whose influence communicates instantaneous light, life, and liberty; which will be doubly sweet to them, when contrasted with their former ignorance and slavery. We delight to view them as the children of Abraham, the father of the faithful, and collateral heirs of the promises—to look upon them as the beloved child that “was lost, but is found.” They revive in our minds, and realize to our senses, the ancient Patri-

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\* Radama himself declares he has no faith in the superstitions of his country, but he makes use of them to keep the people in subjection.

When General Burn was there, he had frequent conversations with an intelligent chief on the subject of religion: he used to interrogate him about his faith and worship, but the chief seemed ashamed of it, and would generally answer—“*Englishman know better; he laugh at Madagascar man, pray God.*” The general, who was a pious character, was then of opinion that an attempt to introduce Christianity into the island would succeed.

archs, who fed their flocks and their herds, journeying from place to place, and forming amongst themselves a fraternity, where every member was a brother or a sister, and over whom one common interest threw the mantle of affection! Such were the Madegasses amidst all their superstitions, till poisoned by the breath of Europeans. Then the box of Pandora was opened, and all the baneful passions, which were latent in their breasts, were called into exercise;—but we will shun the horrid picture, and rather congratulate them upon their happy emancipation—not doubting but that the Almighty has blessings in store for them, which will amply compensate for the ages of suffering through which they have passed.

Nor can we forbear to congratulate our country, which has thus taken by the hand, and raised, as it were, from the dead, a noble and generous, but abused, insulted, and betrayed people; and we are convinced, that every one who has a British heart, will feel himself elevated, at least one degree, in the scale of moral worth, by the generous part his country has taken in this affair. What pecuniary advantage is adequate to the pleasure of thus bestowing happiness?—What selfish considerations are equal to the satisfaction of having rescued our fellow-creatures from misery? Much still, it is true, remains to be done; but we are convinced, that He who has begun the work, will himself raise the means and instruments to complete it.

FINIS.

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## ERRATA.

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- Page 21, line 3, *for tracks, read tracts.*  
88, — 21, *for has, read have.*  
103, — 25, *for wool, read woof.*  
138, — 17, *for dorac, read donac.*  
192, — 27, *for Saphirobac, read Saphirobai.*  
205, — 28, *for were, read where.*  
233, — 17, *for to the, read the.*  
238, — 13, *for Bell, read Bel.*  
291, — 14, *for these, read the.*  
297, — 15, *for utter their, read utters its.*  
302, — 15, *for is, read are.*













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